

THE
CRITICAL AND MISCELLANEOUS
WRITINGS
OF
HENRY LORD BROUGHAM,
TO WHICH IS PREFIXED
A SKETCH OF HIS CHARACTER.

Vol. 135

IN TWO VOLUMES.

^R VOL. I

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BROUGHAM'S SPEECHES.

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THE SPEECHES
OF
HENRY LORD BROUGHAM,
UPON QUESTIONS RELATING TO
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WITH HISTORICAL INTRODUCTIONS,
PREPARED BY HIMSELF.

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"Volumes more brilliant for wit or interest, more remarkable as showing the astonishing mental powers and labours of the author have hardly appeared, in our days at least."—*J. and F. Review*.

"This is a work which ought to be possessed by every free minded man in the British Empire, who can afford to add any books at all to his literary stores. It discusses almost all the political, legal and economical questions, the nearest to men's business and bosoms that have arisen and been mooted within the last forty years."—*Edinburgh Review*.

P R E F A C E.

It is now nearly forty years since Henry Brougham, at the age of three-and-twenty, began those labours ever directed to the advancement of the intellectual and moral condition of his species, the impression of which can never be effaced from the history of the progress of the human mind. The Edinburgh Review, of which he was one of the founders, was the vehicle of the earliest productions of his prolific pen, and has continued to the present time to be occasionally enriched by his contributions on almost every subject with which the improvement of mankind is connected. Political regeneration, the correction of abuses of every sort, the extension of rational liberty, the freedom of conscience, the information and consequent elevation of the operative classes, the improved education of the higher orders, the diffusion of the knowledge of the God of nature through the familiar exposition of the laws of nature,—the reform of parliament, and of the laws,—the restoration of the streams of charity to their proper channel,—in a word, the promotion of every measure which could conduce to ennoble the mind of man, and contribute to the improvement of religion and virtue, has occupied his attention as a

writer and an orator. In these volumes are presented to the American public a series of essays, selected from the imperishable productions of this great man, confined chiefly to his anonymous contributions to the *Edinburgh Review*. When, however, it is remembered that that periodical was commenced in 1802, since which time Lord Brougham has never ceased to be an occasional contributor to its pages, it will not be supposed that the chief part, much less the whole of his essays published from time to time in that work are included in the volumes now offered to the reader. The limit necessarily imposed on the bulk of this series rendered such an object unattainable.

The task of selection has been difficult. Where every essay presents claims to admiration and attention of nearly equal force, few reasons for preference were perceivable. Variety has however been studied, and an attempt has been made to include specimens of very different topics of discussion. The series of articles which appears to have originated with the notice of the treacherous publication by Lady Charlotte Bury, being in a great degree connected with each other, are given complete, having been generally regarded with profound interest in Great Britain. It is true that parts of these have in a modified form been introduced into other publications of Lord Brougham's, and if it could be properly assumed, that such publications should be always within reach of the readers of these volumes, such parts might have been omitted. Since, however, it has not been thought right to proceed on that supposition, and since, moreover, the hiatus which would be produced by such omissions, would

mar the effect of these essays, taken as a whole, they have been inserted complete.

As a specimen of his felicitous power to bring the abstruse sciences to the level of ordinary minds, and to invest them with the charms of an eloquence of which ordinary scientific writers are never masters, the preliminary discourse on the objects, pleasures, and advantages of science, which introduced to the public the Library of Useful Knowledge, has been selected. This memorable essay obtained such a hold on the public mind in Europe, that it was not only circulated to the amount of some hundreds of thousands in England, but was immediately translated and published in all the European languages. The name of the author was not prefixed to the original English editions of this discourse;—it was needless,—there was only one individual living by whom it could have been produced. We well remember, with what surprise we saw, while travelling in the southern countries of Europe, in 1839, the towns even of the smaller class, in the darkest and most priest-ridden parts of the papal dominions, placarded with advertisements of translations of this discourse by *Enrico Brogam*, at prices which proved that the readers included all who *could* read— a rare and enviable tribute to genius.

If the reception of these volumes at the hands of the people of America, be such as to afford the necessary encouragement to the publishers, ample materials remain to form another series, with claims to attention in no degree inferior to those which are presented by the various essays included in this selection.

September, 1841.



HENRY LORD BROUGHAM AND VAUX.

IN evolving its hidden capabilities from the inmost recesses of the popular mind—in scattering to the winds those false notions of greatness which derive all glory from the conquest of nations, and erecting in their place a more noble ambition for the subjugation of the vast powers of NATURE to the uses of MAN—in asserting and establishing the sway of REASON OVER FORCE;—in exalting the dominion of the useful and the peaceful arts—in reducing aristocratic to a more just equilibrium with popular power,—in hunting from their lairs THE ABUSES, whether infesting the palace, the council, the senate, the forum or the church—in extending the limits to which knowledge is diffused—in making the masses respect themselves by making them know the value of the faculties with which God has gifted them—in elevating the standard of public morals by promoting the cultivation of every thing on which public morals depend,—the name of HENRY BROUGHAM will go down

the stream of time, the TYPE and the ORNAMENT of the nineteenth century.

Each age throws up minds, to whose powers it gives direction and whose energies react upon it. The eighteenth century witnessed the aggressive encroachments of a mother nation over her gigantic offspring of the west; humanity revolted at the spectacle of the native savages halloed by Britain on her emigrant children,—and WASHINGTON and FRANKLIN came forth patterns of all the virtues in which the oppressors of America were wanting, the development of these virtues being stimulated by the loathsome contrast exhibited in English policy throughout the struggle for independence. The close of the same century, marked by the political convulsions which shook society from the Mediterranean to the Baltic, and almost dissolved those ties which constitute the social system, saw NAPOLEON arise, to level the pride of sovereigns, to break the spell of legitimacy, and hold up to ridicule and scorn the divine right of kings. War had spent its rage; the last peal of its thunder rolled at a distance; peace resumed her throne and the apostle of public education appeared—his mission was begun. The soldier-minister was told that he might, if he would, unite in his person all the functions of the state,—the army—the navy—the great seal—the mitre! “Let him come on,” exclaimed the inspired leader of Reason against Power,—“Let him come on with his whole force, sword in hand, and the people will not only beat him back, but laugh at his assaults,” “In other times the cry of, the ‘soldier’ is abroad,” was heard with dismay. It will not be so now. Let the soldier be abroad if he will; he can do

nothing in this age. There is another personage abroad—a personage less imposing—in the eyes of some, perhaps, insignificant. THE SCHOOLMASTER IS ABROAD; and I trust to him armed with his Primer, against the soldier in full military array.” Never was the supremacy of moral over physical force more nobly asserted; never did an ethical truth flash more rapidly through a people. The baton of the field marshal, Premier of England, dropped powerless from his hand, and from that moment the issue of the reform question was sealed.

BROUGHAM is emphatically the creature of this age. With mental faculties, as remarkable for versatility as strength, he entered public life prepared to follow not any one of the various paths to renown, but resolved to follow many,—we had nearly said all.—At once, an orator,—he aimed at Demosthenes as a model!—a statesman,—he fearlessly grappled, when almost beardless, with the complicated web of the British colonial policy;—a man of letters,—he assumed when just emerging from adolescence, the chief part in the establishment of one of the most important literary works which this or any other age has seen;—a mathematician,—he enriched the philosophical transactions with his contributions ere sixteen summers had rolled over his head, and later, was chosen one of the eight foreign associates of the French Academy, a rare honour, and the highest a scientific man can attain;—a political and social reformer,—the time-honoured abuses of the representative system fell to pieces under the assaults of his eloquence; the absurdities of the law, consecrated by ages of precedents vanished before the light of his genius like morning

mist before the rising sun, and usages hallowed by the sanction of twenty generations yielded to his giant powers in a single night. A lawyer,—the least and lowest of his distinctions,—with a reputed ignorance of those darling technicalities of the English law which constitute the chief part of the practice of the court, with a mind imbued more deeply with the spirit than the letter of the law, with habits of generalization altogether foreign to that reverence for precedent, so characteristic of the British forum, he forced his way upwards in the profession, with the opinion of the brotherhood against him, and passing over the intermediate steps, leaped almost from the outer bar to the highest judicial office in the state. In which of all these characters shall we contemplate him? Under which shall his name be transmitted to future generations?—

As a forensic orator he stood in the first rank, whether compared with his contemporaries or with those of precedent times. It was not, however, without rivals, nor was his professional success as a *nisiprius* advocate unsurpassed. ERSKINE, who somewhat preceded him, and SCARLET his immediate contemporary, excelled him in the influence they exercised over the minds of a jury. This advantage they owed to the very inferiority of their mental stature, which brought them nearer to the level of the powers and judgments of those who usually filled the jury box. They also devoted themselves to the single object of forensic practice, concentrating on that all their powers, and seeking from it all the fame and all the fortune to which they ever aspired.

With Brougham, the bar was never more than a secondary object;—subsidiary to others far more lofty,

more commensuráté with the vastness of his views, and affording a more noble and more extensive field for the exercise of those high intellectual powers of which he was conscious. Hence, while he cultivated with most assiduous care that oratory which was fitted for the advancement of the public weal in the senate or before the people, he never disciplined himself in that department of rhetorical art most needful to success in his profession; his inextinguishable love for truth unfitted him to advocate whether wrong or right, false or true, any prescribed side of a disputed question. It may be objected to this, that his speeches, as counsel for Queen Caroline, were master pieces of reasoning and dialectics, in which, the consummate skill and tact of the advocate were as conspicuous as the highest powers of the orator. This was, however, a peculiar case. Besides having an undoubting confidence in the justness of the cause he defended, there were other circumstances strongly calling forth his powers;—the rank and sex of his client, the station and power of her persecutor, the sanctity of justice polluted by the foul influences exercised by that persecutor over a great part of the members of the tribunal before which he pleaded,—the indignity offered to a lady, and that lady a queen,—all conspired to awaken the moral sense of the orator, and raise to its highest pitch the indignation of the advocate.

Although every part of this celebrated pleading was calculated to inspire eloquence of the first order, the peculiar powers of Brougham were rendered especially conspicuous in the interlocutory speeches and arguments which arose incidentally during the proceeding

The House of Peers, putting aside the principles of justice, on various technical pretences prompted by the adroit subtlety of Lord Eldon, denied to the accused even the grounds of defence which would have been open to her had she been impeached of high treason. When thus unscrupulously narrowed in his ground of action, the advocate was excited to a still higher pitch of vigour, and appeared to gain force by the very limits within which he found himself confined. A signal display of oratorical gladiatorship was exhibited, which could be appreciated only by being witnessed. The fire is subdued—the inspiration evaporated in the printed report.—

After a course of exclusive practice in a court of common law, and without even the advantage of a reputation for any profound legal knowledge, he came to preside as sole judge over the highest tribunal in the realm.* The practitioners of that court attempted to repeat on the new chancellor, the attacks under which his predecessor had quailed; and relying on the advantage given them by a long life of routine, and an intimate familiarity with the minute technicalities of equity practice, would have snatched him down. The design proved signally abortive. The sparrows circled round the eagle, but dared not peck at him. Pedant mediocrity, armed as it was from the arsenal of the chancery reports, recoiled from his fierce glance and formidable talons, and soon, became the obsequious and crouching adulator of him whose sarcasm never fell without devastation.

Whatever may be thought of Brougham at the bar or on the bench as compared *with others*, there can be no hesitation in pronouncing that as compared *with himself* in the senate. in the public assembly. or

through the press, the distance is quite immeasurable. It is by his displays in that great school and theatre of popular eloquence, the British Parliament, and by his labours in the cause of human improvement through the press, that his name will be remembered with gratitude and admiration by unborn millions. BURKE, FOX, PITT, SHERIDAN,—had been successively withdrawn from the assembly which they had severally adorned and enlightened; CANNING held the stage alone—the successor to their honours and their influence. He soon found his sole rival in Brougham. They continued always rivals, sometimes adversaries, until the lamented and premature death of Canning.

The characters of the eloquence of these two celebrated men differed in a striking manner. Canning was graceful and accomplished—Brougham robust and energetic. Canning had wit, and imagination—Brougham was singularly deficient in these qualities. Canning took possession of his hearers imagination,—Brougham besieged all the avenues of the understanding, and consummated his conquest by bringing the reason of his hearers to the side he supported. Canning was persuasive,—Brougham convincing. The speeches of Canning were adorned with the elegancies and ornaments of literature. Notwithstanding more various and profound reading, if not more extensive and elegant,—Brougham seldom brought to his aid allusion or quotation; the style of his oratory would not have been compatible with it. The order of Canning's eloquence was the Corinthian—that of Brougham's the Doric.*

* Specimens of the oratory of Lord Brougham may be found in a collection of his Speeches, with Introductions by himself, re-

It has been observed that Brougham's oratory is not suited to defensive positions ; that it is constituted and armed for attack. In the encounter he carries no shield, and so essentially is he an assailant, that not content with discharging at his adversaries the contents of his own quiver, he takes up their own missiles which his agility has enabled him to elude, and, handling them with consummate art, flings them back on his opponents with terrific execution.

For sarcasm and irony he stands without any rival among the orators of this or the last age. Yet his good-nature is so predominant that he resorted to these terrible weapons with reluctance, and never but on great occasions.

His loftiest efforts in eloquence have, however, been directed to objects far removed above the regions of party or personal strife. It is when the interest and well being of mankind are involved, that his great powers are awakened, and manifest themselves in their full strength and dimensions. When he saw that the best and highest interests of England called for the establishment of commercial relations with the vast continent of South America, how noble, how imposing. we had almost said how solemn, was the strain of eloquence in which he advocated that measure. " When the first rude invaders after unparalleled dangers and privations almost unsupportable, through a struggle with sufferings beyond endurance, weary, hungry, exhausted with toil, scared at the perils of their march, reached at length the lofty summit so long the object of their anxious hope, they stood
published from the Edinburgh edition by the publishers of these
Essays.

at once motionless in gratitude for their success, in silent amazement at the boundless ocean stretched out before them and the immeasurable dominion spread beneath their feet, the scene of all their former expectation,—and now,” he exclaimed, “the people of England, after *their* long and dreary pilgrimage, after all the dangers they have braved, the difficulties they have over come, the hardships they have survived, in something like the same state of suffering and exhaustion, have thus every prospect opened to their view. If any sense of justice towards them, any regard for the dictates of sound policy, any reverence for the real wisdom of past ages has influence over our own councils, they must be enabled and invited to approach that hemisphere and partake of the numberless benefits which flow from such an intercourse. Upon our good pleasures it depends to command the virgin resources of that mighty expanse of territory—variegated with every species of soil, exposed to all the gradations of climate, rich from the fallow of centuries, sufficiently peopled to raise every variety of the produce we want, yet too thinly inhabited to threaten our own industry with any rivalry—watered in all directions by seas rather than rivers—studded with harbours, through which to distribute its wealth over the old world and the native country of that wherewith the sect of practical politicians are best pleased and their patron saint propitiated, gold and silver mines already fruitful but capable of yielding infinitely larger returns under the management of European skill. Such is a prospect sufficient to compensate for any loss you have sustained; an adequate outlet for your mercantile enterprise, though

Europe were ever more hermetically sealed against you, though Bonaparte were restored and his continental system revived; nay, even though Europe itself for commercial purposes were blotted from the map of the old world.”—

It was on occasions, and on subjects of this kind that Brougham’s oratory attained the highest pitch of its possible excellence.

No event of the life of this great man was so detrimental to his fame and so injurious to the world, as his ministerial elevation, and the evils of this were aggravated by his removal from the commons to the lords. Brougham should never have been in the cabinet. The peculiarities of his mind utterly unfit him for maintaining that concert, that hollow but necessary expression of unanimity;—for observing that discipline of public conduct, especially in parliament,—for submitting to those mutual compromises of opinion,—without any and all of which no cabinet can continue to sustain itself. It is said to have been the desire of the whig party, that he should have taken an office, such as the mastership of the rolls, which, while it would have permitted his remaining in parliament, and even in the House of Commons, would have left him in a great degree free from cabinet restrictions, and it is even said that so fearful were that party, of his uncontrollable nature, that on their accession, they ventured even to tender him the attorney generalship. The offer was spurned with the strongest expressions of contempt, and with his characteristic impetuosity he rushed down to the house and made the memorable speech, in which he repudiated all share in the arrangement, and declared that he would

continue member for Yorkshire. He brought his party to their knees, and the great seal was placed in his hand next day.

On his retirement from office, Lord Brougham withdrew from public life in consequence of ill health, and after a year's retirement, which, however, was occupied beneficially for mankind, by the completion of several works with which the world is already well acquainted, he reappeared in all the strength and power of his best days, as if his genius had been steeped in the waters of youth and liberty. Detached from the ministry, and, indeed, independent of party, he now espoused every popular cause, with a frankness, and decision, which had the appearance of a voluntary relinquishment of any intention of again resuming office, and, the resumption of his more noble and proper character of a great social reformer; all that depended on his own great powers to reproduce the grand effects witnessed in former days, was done; but he had an invincible obstacle opposed to him in the nature and character of the assembly he addressed. It was now he became sensible of the full weight of the error he committed in having left the House of Commons, and his friends say, that he feels and regrets that false step. Wielding in the commons the force and spirit of reform,—backed and cheered by the people of England,—representing, as he ever would have done, the largest and most opulent constituencies—his harangues would be irresistible—no ministry could withstand his opposition within and without the house. But in the lords, awakening no sympathy, and encountering on the contrary, many and bitter antipathies, his finest pieces of declamation have proved powerless.

Lord Brougham at an unusually early age evinced his high scientific capacity, and those who prize natural knowledge, regret that his genius did not take that direction. Had he devoted himself to the physical sciences, no one can doubt that he would have bequeathed to posterity discoveries and works of the very highest order.

It is possible that Lord Brougham may look back with irritated and angered feelings, on the course which the party with which he was so long connected has pursued towards him—that he may regard the Woolsack as his rightful and just place.—But posterity will feel that his emancipation from the trammels of office, and his emergence from the atmosphere of the court have been the incidents in his career, most happy for the world and for his fame. Let him leave it to other and lower spirits to tread the routine of office with discreet and measured steps,—to amble with gentleness and grace in the *manège* of the palace—to move in the grooves of the cabinet, and measure their language not by the dictates of their judgment or their feelings, but by the preconcerted plans of their party.

But be it the high mission of Brougham to school man in the knowledge of his faculties, and discipline him in the lesson of his right—to burst asunder the chains of ignorance and prejudice—to break the spell by which the arrogance of an order would hold the mass of mankind in bondage,—to disenthral reason and vindicate humanity.—Be these the achievements for which future generations of men shall remember with grateful honour, the name of HENRY BROUGHAM.

BROUGHAM'S MISCELLANIES.

GEORGE THE FOURTH.*

[Edinburgh Review, April 1838.]

THE appearance of this silly, dull, and disgraceful publication both calls for some remarks adapted to the offence itself, and affords an opportunity of entering upon the important subjects of the Abuses of the Press, and the Characters of the individuals of whom the book treats.

Various circumstances have concurred to make the restraints upon publicity far less effectual of late years than they ever were before; and in proportion to the greater liberty enjoyed from the diminished risk of legal proceedings, has been the increased license assumed by all who cater for the bad feelings, and bad taste of the public, in providing for its gratification, and swelling their own gains. Among the chief of these circumstances, must, no doubt, be reckoned the rapid progress of free opinions, the conviction of the press's importance as an engine of public instruction, and a vehicle, above all, of political discussion; the aversion felt by all friends of liberty to impose any fetters upon this important agent of good, and the disposition thus produced to pass over its errors, and pardon its abuse in consideration of its eminent usefulness in the vast majority of instances. It

* Diary illustrative of the times of George the Fourth, interspersed with original Letters from the late Queen Caroline, and from various other distinguished persons.

thus became one of the great distinctions between the parties which divide political men both in England and other countries, that the friends of arbitrary government were jealous of the press's licentiousness, and always prone to enforce the law against it; while the advocates of liberal opinions scarcely ever could be persuaded that a case was made out which justified prosecution. It is true, that until a comparatively late period, the friends of the press, however hostile to proceedings against libellers, always restricted this disinclination to cases of public or political writings, and avowed themselves the enemies of all private slander and personal abuse;—holding the protection of that offence to be altogether unnecessary to public liberty, and the commission of it to be pernicious, and not beneficial to the liberty of the press, in the true acceptance of the term. But the line which separates attacks upon private and personal failings from the discussion of public conduct, like that which parts the consideration of measures from the judgment to be pronounced upon men, the authors of those measures, is not always easy to trace or to observe; and the consequence has been, that almost at all times considerable latitude has been allowed of mingling comments on private with remarks upon public conduct; so that, generally speaking, they who were the most adverse to state prosecutions were also the most patient of personal attacks, and the least disposed to seek protection from the law against even very unmeasured abuse of their private demeanour. It is hardly necessary to add, that such distinctions between the two parties, and such repugnance in both to proceedings against libels of any kind, became more marked as the diffusion of liberal opinions became more general, and that progress more rapid. But it is fit that we consider the effects of this improvement, as it materially affected the conduct even of the party most opposed to the licentiousness of the press. They followed their more liberal adversaries, though at a distance which was increasing and not lessening. State prosecutions became daily more rare, and it seems difficult to believe that we live in the same country and under the same law, when we

cast our eye over the kind of publications prosecuted as libels, not merely fifty, but five-and-twenty years ago; and see the sedition and the scurrility now daily printed without the least effort to check either by judicial proceedings. Who can think that he lives in the same community which expressed no kind of surprise or reprobation, when Sir Vicary Gibbs filed, all at once, between twenty and thirty *ex officio* informations, chiefly for comments upon the character and conduct of members of the royal family; and when the same law officer of the crown some years later, put the editor of the most moderate and most respectable paper of the day upon his trial, for remarking that the successor of George the Third would have a glorious task when he came to the throne, from the contrast which his reign might afford to that of his royal predecessor? It may safely be asserted, that there is no one newspaper or other publication now, in the whole United Kingdom, which ever mentions the conduct of any one member of the royal family with disapprobation half so gentle as in 1809 exposed the late Mr. Perry to a very imminent risk of being convicted and punished; while there are in every quarter of the country almost daily attacks made upon all princes, all magistrates, and all others in high stations, which, a quarter of a century ago, would inevitably have consigned their authors to imprisonment for two years, accompanied by a heavy fine.

With this more general cause, others of an accidental nature combined, about the same time, to increase the freedom of the press, by interposing obstacles in the way of prosecutions. Of these accidental circumstances, the affair of the Duke of York, which occupied so large a portion of the public attention in 1809, and drew it away from matters of far greater moment, was the most remarkable. It may with perfect safety be affirmed, that the result of this singular investigation proved, after time had been allowed for calm reflection, far less injurious to the exalted individuals whom it chiefly concerned, than to the system of which he and his defenders were the strenuous advocates; and, indeed, that when the season for pronouncing a cool judgment had arrived, others were found to have sustained, in the

course of the proceedings, much more damage than the person against whom they were pointed. There was left, however, a general impression exceedingly unfavourable to the royal family; not merely as to their habits of life, but as to their jealousies and intrigues against one another; and the disgraceful scenes, soon afterwards disclosed in some legal proceedings, connected with the Duke of York's case, tended greatly to increase that impression, by showing one of his brothers mixed up in the combination that had been formed to accomplish his ruin. As for the duke himself, indeed, his love affairs were not to be justified; yet from all the charges of corruption he was completely cleared; nor could any one living believe him guilty of more connivance at the jobs of those about him, than might well be ascribed to the careless habits of an extremely good-natured man, of less than the ordinary measure of acuteness and sagacity. Against this was willingly set by his friends, and readily admitted by the world at large, the admirable dispositions of that prince,—his kindness of temper, his affection for his friends, his regard for his word generally, the undeviating integrity of his dealings in private life, his entire want of all pride, and singular exemption from the common failings of princes in the intercourse of society; even his pertinacious adherence to opinions which the bulk of mankind believed to be erroneous, but which he, because conscientiously imbued with them, treated as of religious obligation. It may be affirmed that there seldom has lived an individual in his exalted station, who possessed more of the general esteem, who had more personal friends, and whose friends loved him better; while even his political adversaries gave him credit for the honesty of his prejudices, willingly overlooking the obstinacy with which he clung to them.

But although the character of the Duke of York did not suffer materially in the estimation of the circles to which he belonged, it is impossible to doubt that with the community at large, and especially the middle and lower classes, his morals were regarded as of a libertine cast, in consequence of the disclosures made respecting his illicit amours: and the circumstance of these things

not being denied by his defenders, and of his reputation with the upper classes suffering nothing in consequence, plainly indicated that a lax morality prevailed at court, as well as that the royal family shared in this stain. The consequence was, that both the aristocracy at large, and, in an especial manner, the family, became objects of distrust or aversion with a large body of the people: who had till then never distinctly perceived that the different orders of society lived under different dispensations of the moral law. The freedom with which the press commented upon these things became impossible to check: no prosecution could be instituted against any libellers, however violent; no jury could be expected to convict, how indecent soever might be the license of abuse assumed; and all the pending informations and indictments were at once abandoned as hopeless. Not only attacks upon the royal family were published without any reserve or decorum, but libels upon all other public men were circulated with equal freedom; and unmeasured invectives against all the institutions of the state were, in like manner, ventilated through all the channels of publication, without restraint; because, when there was no possibility of prosecuting the libels upon the royal family, it became impossible to prosecute other libels, without appearing to admit the innocence of the former class of writings. Indeed there is every reason to believe that juries would have been as unwilling to convict the one class of libellers as the other; because the singling out a few publications for prosecution, when so many were suffered to pass unheeded, would have appeared contrary to all honesty of purpose, and would have set the minds of men against the proceedings. Accordingly, in the comparatively few attempts made,—as when libels respecting military punishments were prosecuted,—the influence of the crown and the authority of the bench failed in some remarkable instances to obtain convictions.

The restoration of peace brought along with it for some time, if not a suspension of political strife, at least a mitigation of its rancour; and the press, ceasing to exhibit any great activity or animosity, was itself left at

rest. There ensued some years of great distress, and the symptoms of disaffection which appeared in its train were laid hold of as the pretext for suspending the constitution. While the power of arbitrary imprisonment was invested in the government, it is needless to observe that writers, like all other persons, were controlled by the fear of being arrested and confined for an indefinite period of time, without any trial or even any charge. But before the end of George III.'s reign, the constitution had been restored; and the accession of his son, who from regent became king, in consequence of a circumstance accidental in some degree, produced effects as remarkable upon the freedom of public discussion, as the Duke of York's case had done ten years before. But from its own nature, from the unusual interest which it excited, and from its influence upon the aspect of political affairs in this country, as well as upon the character and conduct of the press, both at the time and in its more remote consequences, we are called upon, to trace to its origin, the event to which we have now only very generally alluded, as connected with the regent's accession to the crown.

George, Prince of Wales, had been educated after the manner of all princes whose school is the palace of their ancestors, whose teacher is boundless prosperity, whose earliest and most cherished associate is unrestrained self-indulgence, and who neither among their companions form the acquaintance of any equal, nor in the discipline of the seminary ever taste of control. The regal system of tuition is, indeed, curiously suited to its purpose of fashioning men's minds to the task of governing their fellow-creatures—of training up a naturally erring and sinful creature to occupy the most arduous of all human stations, the one most requiring habits of self-command, and for duly filling which, all the instruction that man can receive, and all the virtue his nature is capable of practising, would form a very inadequate qualification. This system had, upon the Prince of Wales, produced its natural effects in an unusually ample measure. He seemed, indeed, to come forth from the school a finished specimen of its capa-

bilities and its powers, as if to show how much havoc can be made in a character originally deficient in none of the good and few of the great qualities, with which it may be supposed that men are born. Naturally of a temper by no means sour or revengeful, he had become selfish to a degree so extravagant, that he seemed to act upon the practical conviction, that all mankind were born for his exclusive use; and hence he became irritable on the least incident that thwarted his wishes: nay, seemed to consider himself injured, and thus entitled to gratify his resentment, as often as any one, even from a due regard to his own duty or his own character, acted in a way to disappoint his expectations or ruffle his repose. His natural abilities, too, were far above mediocrity: he was quick, lively, gifted with a retentive memory, and even with a ready wit—endowed with an exquisite ear for music, and a justness of eye, that fitted him to attain refined taste in the arts—possessed, too, of a nice sense of the ludicrous, which made his relish for humour sufficiently acute, and bestowed upon him the powers of an accomplished mimic. The graces of his person and his manners need not be noted, for neither are valuable but as the adjunct of higher qualities; and the latter, graceful manners, are hardly to be avoided by one occupying, all his life, that first station which removes constraint, and makes the movements of the prince as naturally graceful as those of the infant or the child too young to feel embarrassment. But of what avail are all natural endowments without cultivation? They can yield no more fruit than a seed or a graft cast out upon a marble floor; and cultivation, which implies labour, discipline, self-control, submission to others, never can be applied to the royal state. They who believe that they are exempt from the toils, and hardly liable to the casualties of other mortals—all whose associates, and most of whose instructors, set themselves about confirming this faith—are little likely to waste the midnight oil in any contemplations but those of the debauchee; and those who can hardly bring themselves to believe that they are subject to the common fate of humanity, are pretty

certain to own no inferior control. "Quoi donc" (exclaimed the young dauphin to his right reverend preceptor, when some book mentioned a king as having died)—"Quoi donc les Rois meurent-ils?" "Quelquefois, Monseigneur," was the cautious and courtly reply. That this prince should afterwards grow, in the natural course of things, into Louis XV., and that his infant aptitude for the habits of royalty thus trained, should expand into the maturity of self-indulgence which almost proved too great a trial of French loyal patience, is not matter of wonder. Our Louis, notwithstanding the lessons of Dean Jackson, and the fellowship of Thurlow and Sheridan, was a man of very uncultivated mind—ignorant of all but the passages of history which most princes read, with some superficial knowledge of the dead languages, which he had imperfectly learnt and scantily retained, considerable musical skill, great facility of modern tongues, and no idea whatever of the rudiments of any science, natural or moral; unless the very imperfect notions of the structure of governments, picked up in conversation or studied in newspapers, can be reckoned any exception to the universal blank.

We have said nothing of the great quality of all,—the test of character,—firmness, and her sister truth. That the prince was a man of firm mind, not even his most unscrupulous flatterers ever could summon up the courage to pretend. He was much the creature of impulses, and the sport of feelings naturally good and kind; but had become wholly selfish through unlimited indulgence. Those who knew him well were wont to say that he was a woman's character, when they observed how little self-command he had, and how easily he gave way to petty sentiments. Nor was the remark more gallant towards the sex than it was respectful towards the prince; inasmuch as the character of a woman transferred to the other sex implies the want of those qualities which constitute manly virtue, without the possession of the charms by which female weaknesses are redeemed; independently of the fact that those weaker parts are less prejudicial in the woman, because they are more in harmony with the whole.

That they who draw the breath of life in a court, and pass all their lives in an atmosphere of lies, should have any very sacred regard for truth is hardly to be expected. They experience such falschood in all who surround them, that deception, at least suppression of the truth, almost seems necessary for self-defence; and, accordingly, if their speech be not framed upon the theory of the French cardinal, that language was given to man for the better concealment of his thoughts, they at least seem to regard in what they say, not its resemblance to the fact in question, but rather its subserviency to the purpose in view.

The course of private conduct which one in such a station,—of such habits, and of such a disposition,—might naturally be expected to run, was that of the prince from his early youth upwards; and when he entered upon public life, he was found to have exhausted the resources of a career of pleasure; to have gained followers without making friends; to have acquired much envy and some admiration among the unthinking multitude of polished society; but not to command, in any quarter, either respect or esteem. The line of political conduct which he should pursue was chalked out by the relative position in which he stood to his father, and still more by that monarch's character, in almost all respects the reverse of his own. Of a narrow understanding, which no culture had enlarged; of an obstinate disposition, which no education, perhaps, could have humanized; of strong feelings in ordinary things, and a resolute attachment to all his own opinions and predilections, George III. possessed much of the firmness of purpose which, being exhibited by men of contracted mind without any discrimination, and as pertinaciously when they are in the wrong as when they are in the right, lends to their characters an appearance of inflexible consistency, which is often mistaken for greatness of mind, and not seldom received as a substitute for honesty. In all that related to his kingly office he was the slave of as deep rooted selfishness as his son; and no feeling of a kindly nature ever was suffered to cross his mind, whenever his power was con-

cerned, either in its maintenance, or in the manner of exercising it. In other respects, he was a man of amiable disposition, and few princes have been more exemplary in their domestic habits, or in the offices of private friendship. But the instant that his prerogative was concerned, or his bigotry interfered with, or his will thwarted, the most unbending pride, the most bitter animosity, the most calculating coldness of heart, the most unforgiving resentment, took possession of his whole breast, and swayed it by turns. The habits of friendship, the ties of blood, the dictates of conscience, the rules of honesty were alike forgotten; and the fury of the tyrant, with the resources of a cunning which mental alienation is supposed to whet, were ready to circumvent or to destroy all who interposed an obstacle to the fierceness of unbridled desire. His conduct throughout the American war, and towards the Irish people has often been cited as illustrative of the dark side of his public character; and his treatment of the prince, whom he hated with a hatred scarcely consistent with the supposition of a sound mind, might seem to illustrate the shadier part of his personal disposition; but it was in truth, only another part of his public, his professional conduct; for he had no better reason for this implacable aversion, than the jealousy which men have of their successors, and the consciousness that the prince, who must succeed him, was unlike him, and, being disliked by him, must, during their joint lives, be thrown into the hands of the adversaries he most of all detested.

It thus happened that the whig party, being the enemies of George III., found favour in the sight of his son, and became his natural allies. In the scramble for power, they highly valued such an auxiliary, and many of them were received also into the personal favour of this illustrious political recruit. But state affairs were only taken as a stimulant, to rouse the dormant appetite, when more vulgar excitement had fatigued the jaded sense; and it would be extremely difficult to name the single occasion on which any part was taken by him, whom the whigs held out as the most exalted

member of their body, from the end of the American war until the beginning of the contest with France. An event then occurred which brought his royal highness upon the stage, but not as a friend of the liberal party. He came forward to disclaim them—to avow that his sentiments differed widely from theirs—and to declare that upon the great question which divided the world, he took part with the enemies of liberty and of reform. The French revolution had alarmed him, in common with most of his order; he quitted the party for many years; he gave the only support he had to give, his vote, to their adversaries. The rest of his political history is soon told. When the alarm had subsided, he gradually came back to the opposition party, and acted with them until his father's illness called him to the regency, when he shamefully abandoned them, flung himself into the hands of their antagonists, and continued to the end of his days their enemy, with a relentless bitterness, a rancorous malignity, which betokened the spite of his nature, and his consciousness of having injured and betrayed those whom, therefore, he never could forgive. It was, indeed, the singular and unenviable fate of this prince, that he who at various times had more “troops of friends” to surround him, than any man of any age, changed them so often, and treated them so ill, as to survive, during a short part of his life, every one of his attachments, and to find himself before its close in the hands of his enemies, or of mere strangers, the accidental connexions of yesterday.

After running the course of dissipation, uninterrupted by any more rational or worthy pursuit,—prematurely exhausting the resources of indulgence, both animal and mental, and becoming incapable of receiving farther gratification, unless the wish of the ancient tyrant could be gratified by the invention of some new pleasure,—it was found that a life of what was called unbounded profusion could not be passed without unlimited extravagance, and that such enormous sums had been squandered in a few years as seem to baffle conjecture how the money could have been spent. The bill was of course brought into the country, and one of the items

which swelled the total amount to above half a million, was many hundreds (we believe thousands) of pounds for Marehall powder—a perfumed brown dust with which the fops of those days filled their hair, in preference to using soap and water, after the manner of the less courtly times that succeeded the French revolution. The discontent which this unprincipled and senseless waste of money occasioned, had no effect in mending the life of its author; and in a few years after, a new debt had been incurred, and the aid of parliament was required again. There seemed now no chance but one of extricating the prince from the difficulties with which he had surrounded himself, and obtaining such an increased income as might enable him to continue his extravagance without contracting new debts. That chance was his consenting to marry; in order that the event might take place, so pleasing to a people whom all the vices and follies of royalty can never wean from their love of princes, and the increase of the royal family be effected with due regularity of procedure from the heir-apparent's loins. But although the entering into the state of matrimony in regular form, and with the accustomed publicity, might afford the desired facilities of a pecuniary kind, such a step little suited the taste of the illustrious personage usually termed “The hope of the country.” That the restraints of wedlock should be dreaded by one to whom all restraint had hitherto been a stranger, and who could set at nought whatever obligations of constancy that holy and comfortable estate imposed, was wholly out of the question. If that were all, he could have no kind of objection to take as many wives as the law of the land allowed—supposing the dower of each to be a bill upon the patient good-nature of the English people, towards discharging some mass of debt contracted. But there had happened another event, not quite suited to the people's taste, although of a matrimonial kind, which had been most carefully concealed for very sufficient reasons, and which placed him in a predicament more embarrassing even than his pecuniary difficulties.

The most excusable by far, indeed, the most respect-

able of all the prince's attachments, had been that which he had early formed for Mrs. Fitzherbert, a woman of the most amiable qualities, and the most exemplary virtue. Her abilities were not shining, nor were her personal charms dazzling, nor was she even in the first stage of youth; but her talents were of the most engaging kind; she had a peculiarly sweet disposition united to sterling good sense, and was possessed of manners singularly fascinating. His passion for this excellent person, was a redeeming virtue of the prince; it could only proceed from a fund of natural sense and good taste which, had it but been managed with ordinary prudence and care, would have endowed a most distinguished character in private life; and could it by any miracle have been well managed in a palace, must have furnished out a ruler, before whose lustre the fame of Titus and the Antonines would grow pale. This passion was heightened by the difficulties which its virtuous object interposed to its gratification; and upon no other terms than marriage could that be obtained. But marriage with this admirable lady was forbidden by law! She was a Roman Catholic; sincerely attached to the religion of her forefathers, she refused to purchase a crown by conforming to any other; and the law declared, that whoever married a catholic should forfeit all right to the crown of these realms, as if he were naturally dead. This law, however, was unknown to her, and, blinded by various pretences, she was induced to consent to a clandestine marriage, which is supposed to have been solemnized between her and the prince beyond the limits of the English dominions: in the silly belief, perhaps, entertained by him, that he escaped the penalty to which his reckless conduct exposed him, and, that the forfeiture of his succession to the crown was only denounced against such a marriage, if contracted within the realm. The consent of the sovereign was another requisite of the law to render the marriage valid; that consent had not been obtained; and the invalidity of the contract was supposed to save the forfeiture. But they who so construed the plain provision in the Bill of Rights, and assumed, first, that no forfeiture

could be incurred, by doing an act which was void in itself, whereas, the law of England, as well as of Scotland, and every other country,* abounds in cases of acts prohibited and made void, yet punished by a forfeiture of the rights of him who contravenes the prohibition, as much as if they were valid and effectual. The same courtly reasoners and fraudulent match-makers of Carlton House, next assumed that statutes so solemn as the Bill of Rights and act of settlement could be varied, and, indeed, repealed in an essential particular, most clearly within their mischief, by a subsequent law which makes not the least reference whatever to their provisions; while no man could doubt that to prevent even the attempt at contravening those prohibitions was the object of the acts, in order to prevent all risks; it being equally manifest that if merely preventing a catholic from being the sovereign's consort, had been the only purpose of the enactment, this could have been most effectually accomplished by simply declaring the marriage void, and the forfeiture of the crown being wholly superfluous. It is, therefore, very far from being clear, that this marriage was no forfeiture of the crown. But, it may be said, the prince ran the risk only for himself, and no one has a right to complain. Not so. The forfeiture of the crown was his own risk assuredly; but he trepanned Mrs. Fitzherbert into a sacrifice of her honour to gratify his passion, when he well knew that the ceremony which she was made to believe a marriage, could only be regarded as a mere empty form, of no legal validity or effect whatever; unless, indeed, that of exposing her and all who assisted, to the high pains and penalties of a *premunire*. While he pretended that he was making her his wife, and made her believe she was such, he was only making her the victim

* To lawyers this matter is quite familiar. In England, if a tenant for life, makes a feoffment in fee, this forfeits his life estate, although the attempt to enlarge his estate is altogether ineffectual, and the feoffee takes nothing by the grant. In Scotland, if an heir of entail fettered by the fencing clauses, makes a conveyance contrary to the prohibitions, the deed is wholly void, and yet he forfeits the estate, to use the words of the Bill of Rights, "as if he were naturally dead."

of his passions, and the accomplice of his crimes. A few years after, when those passions had cooled, or were directed into some new channel, the rumour having got abroad, a question was asked in parliament respecting the alleged marriage. His chosen political associates were appealed to, and, being instructed by him, denied the charge in the most unqualified terms. Before such men as Mr. Fox and Mr. Grey could thus far commit their honour, they took care to be well assured of the fact by direct personal communication with the prince himself. He most solemnly denied the whole upon his sacred honour; and his denial was, through these most respectable channels, conveyed to the House of Commons. We are giving here a matter of history, well known at the time;—a thousand times repeated since, and never qualified by the parties, or contradicted on their behalf. It must be confessed, that this passage of the prince's story, made his treatment of Mrs. Fitzherbert complete in all its parts. After seducing her with a false and fictitious marriage, he refused her the pure gratification of saving her reputation, by letting the world believe he had really made her his wife. Instances are not wanting of men committing in public a breach of veracity, and sacrificing truth to save the reputation of their paramours; nor is any moralist so stern as to visit with severe censure conduct like this. But who was there ever yet so base as deliberately to pledge his honour to a falsehood, for the purpose of his own protection, and in order to cover with shame her whom his other false pretences had deceived into being his paramour? Bad as this is, worse remains to be told. This treachery was all for the lucre of gain; the question was raised, upon an application to parliament for money; and the falsehood was told to smooth the difficulties that stood in the way of a vote in Committee of Supply!

The influence of Mrs. Fitzherbert gave place to another connexion, for purposes of sensual gratification, but she retained that sway over his mind which we have described as the brightest feature in the prince's character. Hence he spared no pains to make her believe that the public denial of their wedlock was only rendered

necessary by his father's prejudices and tyrannical conduct. She well knew, that to find an example of fear greater than that dread with which he quailed at the sound of his father's voice, or indeed the bare mention of his name, it was necessary to go among the many-coloured inhabitants of the Caribbee Islands; and hence she could the more easily credit the explanation given of the disclaimer so cruel to her feelings. In private, therefore, and with her, he still passed himself for her husband, and she learned like other and more real wives, to shut her eyes upon his infidelities, while her empire over his mind remained unshaken. The pressure of new difficulties rendered a regular marriage necessary for his extrication; but as this must at once and for ever dispel all that remained of the matrimonial delusion, he long resisted the temptation, through fear of Mrs. Fitzherbert, and dread of their intercourse coming to a violent end. At length, the increasing pressure of his embarrassments overweighed all other considerations, and he consented to a marriage, and to give up Mrs. Fitzherbert for ever. The other person with whom he lived upon the most intimate terms, is supposed to have interposed fresh obstacles to this scheme; but these were overcome by an understanding that the new wife should enjoy only the name;—that systematic neglect and insult of every kind heaped upon her should attest how little concern the heart had with this honourable arrangement, and how entirely the husband continued devoted to the wedded wife of another. Every thing was now settled to the satisfaction of all parties. The old spouse was discarded—the old mistress was cherished, fondled, and appeased—the faithful commons were over-joyed at the prospect of a long line of heirs to the crown—the royal people were enraptured at the thoughts of new princes and princesses—the king, while he felt his throne strengthened by the provision made for the succession, was gratified with whatever lowered the person he most hated and despised—and the prince himself was relieved of much debt, and endowed with augmented resources. One party alone was left out of the general consideration—the intended consort of this illustrious character,

whose peculiar pride it was to be called by his flatterers the "First Gentleman in Europe."

Caroline, Princess of Brunswick, was the individual whom it was found convenient to make the sacrifice on this occasion, to an arrangement that diffused so universal a joy through this free, moral, and reflecting country. She was niece of George III., and consequently one of the prince's nearest relations. Nor has it ever been denied, that in her youth she was a princess of singular accomplishments, as well of mind as of person. All who had seen her in those days represented her as lovely; nor did she, on touching our shores, disappoint the expectations which those eye-witnesses had raised. All who had known her in that season of youth, and before care had become the companion of her life, and the cruelty of others had preyed upon her feelings and sapped her understanding, described her mental endowments as brilliant; and a judge, alike experienced and severely fastidious, long after she had come amongst us, continued to paint her as formed to be "the life, grace, and ornament of polished society."* Her talents were indeed far above the ordinary level of women, and had her education not been rather below the ordinary stock of princesses, they would have decked her in accomplishments remarkable for any station. Endowed with the greatest quickness of apprehension, with a singularly ready wit, and with such perseverance as is rarely seen in the inmates of a court, she shone in conversation, and could have excelled in higher studies than statuary, the only one to which she devoted her attention. If it be said that her buoyant spirits were little compatible with the etiquette of a German court, and made her attend less to forms than the decorum of our English palaces, under the cold and stiff reign of George and Charlotte, might seem to require—so must it be confessed, on the other hand, that no person of the exalted station to which this great lady was born, and the still higher elevation of rank which she afterwards reached, ever showed such entire freedom from all haughtiness

* Mr. Canning in the House of Commons.

and pride, or more habitually estimated all who approached her by their intrinsic merits. The first duchess in the land, or the humblest of its peasants, were alike welcome to her, if their endowments and their dispositions claimed her regard ; and if by the accident of birth she was more frequently thrown into the fellowship of the one, she could relish the talk, seek out the merits, admire the virtues, and interest herself in the fortunes of the other, without ever feeling the difference of their rank, even so far as to betray in her manner that she was honouring them by her condescension. Thus, all might well be charmed with her good nature, lively humour, and kindly demeanour, while no one ever thought of praising her affability.

But Caroline of Brunswick had far higher qualities than these ; she put forward, in the course of her hapless and checkered existence, claims of a much loftier caste. She had a delight in works of beneficence that made charity the very bond of her existence ; nor were the sufferings of her life unconnected with this amiable propensity of her nature. Her passionate fondness for children, balked by that separation from her only offspring to which she was early doomed, led her into the unwise course of adopting the infants of others, which she cherished as if they had been her own. Her courage was of the highest order of female bravery, scorning all perils in the pursuit of worthy objects, leading her certainly into adventures that were chiefly recommended by their risks, but like the active courage of a woman, suffering occasionally intervals of suspension according to the state of the animal spirits, possibly influenced by the physical constitution of their frame, although the passive virtue of fortitude never knew abatement or eclipse. There were occasions, indeed, when her two distinguishing characteristics were both called forth in unison, and her brave nature ministered to her charity. While travelling in the east, the plague broke out among her suite. Unappalled by a peril which has laid prostrate the stoutest hearts, she entered the hospital, and set to others the example of attending upon the sick, regardless of even the extreme risk which she ran by

hanging over their beds and touching their persons. Let it be added to this, that her nature was absolutely without malice or revenge; that she hardly knew the merit of forgiveness of injuries, because it cost her nothing; and that a harsh expression, a slanderous aspersion, any indication of hatred or of spite never broke from her, even when the resources of ingenuity were exhausted in order to goad her feelings, and self-defence almost made anger and resentment a duty.

It will be said that we have presented the fair side of this remarkable picture,—remarkable if the original were found in a cottage, but in a palace little short of miraculous. If, however, there be so fair a side to the portraiture, shall it not turn away the wrath that other features may possibly raise on reversing the medal? But that is not the defence, nor even the palliation which belongs to this unparalleled case. Was ever human being so treated—above all, was ever woman, so treated as this woman had been—visited with severe censure if she at some time fell into the snares at all times laid for her undoing? Were ever faults, made next to unavoidable by systematic persecution in all matters down to the most trifling from the most grave, regarded as inexpiable, or only to be expiated by utter destruction? It is one of the grossest and most unnatural of the outrages against all justice, to say nothing of charity, which despots and other slave-owners commit, that they visit on their hapless victims the failings which their oppressions burn as it were into the character—that they affect disgust and reprobation at what is their own hardiwork—and assume from the vices they have themselves engendered a new right to torment whom they have degraded. These men can never learn the lessons of inspired wisdom, and lay their account with reaping as they have sowed. “Were a tyrant,” it was said, on a late great occasion, “to assume some strange caprice, by grafting the thorn upon the vine-tree, or placing the young dove among vultures, to be reared, surely it would surpass even the caprice of a tyrant and his proverbial contempt of all reason beyond his own will, were he to complain that he could no longer gather grapes from the

plant, and that the perverted nature of the dove thirsted for blood." Did any parent, unnatural enough to turn his child among gipsies, ever prove so senseless or unreasonable as to complain of the dishonest habits his offspring had acquired? By what title, then, shall a husband, who, after swearing upon the altar to love, protect, and cherish his wife, casts her away from him, and throws her into whatever society may beset her in a strange country, pretend to complain of incorrect demeanour when it is no fault of his that there remains in the bosom of his victim one vestige of honesty, of purity, or of honour? It is not denied, it cannot be denied, that levities little suited to her station marked the conduct of the princess; that unworthy associates sometimes found admittance to her presence; that in the hands of intriguing women she became a tool of their silly, senseless plots; that, surrounded by crafty politicians, she suffered her wrongs to be used as the means of gratifying a place-hunting ambition, which rather crawled than climbed; and that a character naturally only distinguished by mere heedless openness, and a frankness greater than common prudence seems to justify in those who dwell in palaces, became shaded if not tarnished, by a disposition to join in unjustifiable contrivances for self-defence. But the heavy charges of guilt brought against her, in two several investigations, were triumphantly repelled, and by the universal assent of mankind scattered in the wind, amidst their unanimous indignation; and from the blame of lesser faults and indiscretions into which she is confessed to have been betrayed, the least regard to the treatment she met with, must, in the contemplation of all candid minds, altogether set her free.

No sooner was the marriage solemnized, which plunged the country into unmixed joy, and raised a mingled expectation and sneer among the population of the court, than the illustrious husband proceeded to the most exemplary, and indeed scrupulous fulfilment of his vows—but not those made at the altar. There were others of a prior date, to which, with the most rigorous sense of justice, he therefore gave the preference;—per-

forming them with an exactness even beyond the strict letter of the engagement. It is true they were not quite consistent with the later obligations "to love, cherish, and protect;" but they were vows notwithstanding, and had been attested with many oaths, and fierce imprecations, and accompanied with a touching and a copious effusion of tears. Their purport was an engagement to reject, to hate, and to insult the wedded wife; to yield her rival, not unwedded, but the helpmate of another, the preference on all occasions; to crown the existence of the one with all favour, and affection, and respect, while that of the other should be made wretched and unbearable by every slight which could be given, every outrage offered to the feelings most tyrannical over the female bosom. Swift followed, then, upon the making of the second and public vow, the punctual fulfilment of the first and private obligation. Never did the new-married pair meet but in the presence of others; the princess was treated on every occasion, but most on public occasions, with ostentatious neglect, nay, with studied contumely; each resource of ingenious spite was exhausted in devising varied means of exhibiting her position in melancholy contrast with the empire of her rival: when she submitted, trampled upon as dastardly and mean; when she was reluctantly goaded into self-defence, run down and quelled and punished as contumacious; and as soon as mal-treatment was suspected to have begotten the desire of retaliation, she was surrounded with spies, that not a gesture or a look, a word or a sigh might pass unregistered, unexaggerated, unperverted. Yet no one incident could be found upon which to hang the slightest charge of impropriety. Witness the necessity to which the whig friends of Carlton-House were reduced (for want of other blame,) of complaining that the sympathy of the people had been awaked in behalf of the persecuted and defenceless stranger; and that she did not shun occasions of seeing her only friend, the people, so carefully as the whig notion of female propriety deemed fitting, or the Carlton-House standard of conjugal delicacy required.

At the end of a tedious and sorrowful year the birth

of the Princess Charlotte once more intoxicated the nation with loyal joy, and made it forget as well the silent sorrows of the one parent, as the perfidious cruelty of the other. Scarce had the mother recovered, when a fresh and unheard-of outrage greeted her returning health. The "First Gentleman of his age" was pleased, under his own hand, to intimate, that it suited his disposition no longer to maintain even the thin covering of decency which he had hitherto suffered to veil the terms of their union; he announced that they should now live apart; and added, with a refinement of delicacy suited to the finished accomplishments of his pre-eminence among gentlemen, that he pledged himself never to ask for a nearer connexion, even if their only child should die; and he added, with a moving piety, "which God forbid!" in case it might be imagined that the death of the daughter was as much his hope as the destruction of the mother. The separation, thus delicately effected, made only an apparent change in the relative position of the parties. They had before occupied the same house, because they had lived under one roof, but in a state of complete separation; and now the only difference was, that, instead of making a partition of the dwelling, and assigning her one half of its interior, he was graciously pleased to make a new division of the same mansion, giving her the outside, and keeping the inside to his mistresses and himself.

The incessant vigilance with which the unhappy princess's conduct was now watched, by eyes ready to minister fictions to those who employed them, soon produced a report that their prey had fallen into the appointed snare. It was duly represented to the "most amiable prince of his times," living with his paramours, that the wife whom he had discarded for their society, and to whom he had given what the head of the law, his comrade and adviser,* scrupled not to term "a letter of license," had followed his example, and used the license; in short, that she had been secretly delivered of a child. No intrigue had been denounced as detected

* Lord Thurlow.

by the spies; nor could any person be fixed on as he who had committed high treason, by defiling the solitary bed to which the "Companion of the King's son"* had been condemned by her tender and faithful consort. The charge, however, was made, and it was minutely investigated; not by the friends of the accused, but by the political and the personal associates of her husband. The result was, her complete and triumphant acquittal of all but the charge that she had, to vary the monotony of her sequestered life, adopted the child of a sail-maker in the neighbourhood of her residence; thus endeavouring to find for her own daughter's society a substitute upon whom the natural instinct of maternal feeling might find a vent, to relieve an overburdened heart. It was little creditable, certainly, to the commissioners who conducted this "Delicate Investigation," as it was termed, that they stooped to mention levities of conduct wholly immaterial, and avowedly quite inoffensive in her, while they cautiously abstained from pronouncing any censure upon the guilt of the other party, by whose faithlessness and cruelty her existence had been rendered a scene of misery.

In those days the accidental distributions of party had made the princess acquainted with the most eminent of the tory chiefs; Lord Eldon, Mr. Perceval, and Mr. Canning. These distinguished personages composed her familiar society, and they were her faithful counsellors through all her difficulties. Nor would it have been easy to find men on whom she could more safely rely for powerful assistance as advocates, or able advice as friends.

Lord Eldon, to great legal experience, and the most profound professional learning, united that thorough knowledge of men which lawyers who practice in the courts, and especially the courts of common law,† attain in a measure, and with an accuracy hardly conceivable to those out of the profession, who idly fancy that it is only from intercourse with courts and camps that a

* *La Campagne Filz le Roy*—says the statute of treasons.

† Lord Eldon was well versed in *Nisi Prius* practice during a great part of his life, having gone the northern circuit for many years.

knowledge of the world can be derived. He had a sagacity almost unrivalled; a penetration of mind at once quick and sure; a shrewdness so great as to pierce through each feature of his peculiarly intelligent countenance; a subtlety so nimble, that it materially impaired the strength of his other qualities, by lending his ingenuity an edge sometimes too fine for use. Yet this defect, the leading one of his intellectual character, was chiefly confined to his professional exertions; and the counsellor, so hesitating in answering an important case—the judge so prone to doubt that he could hardly bring his mind to decide one—was, in all that practically concerned his party or himself, as ready to take a line, and to follow it with determination of purpose, as the least ingenious of ordinary politicians. The timidity, too, of which he has been accused, and sometimes justly, was more frequently the result of the subtlety and refinement which we have mentioned. At all events, no one knew better when to cast it off; and upon great occasions, (that is, the occasions which put his interest or his power in jeopardy,) a less wavering actor, indeed one more ready, at a moment's warning, to go all lengths for the attainment of his object, never appeared upon the political stage. His fears, in this respect, very much resembled his conscientious scruples, of which no man spoke more or felt less; he was about as often the slave of them as the Indian is of his deformed little gods, of which he makes much, and then breaks them to pieces, or casts them into the fire. When all politics seemed smooth, and the parliamentary sea was unruffled as the peaceful lake, nothing was to be heard but his lordship's deep sense of his responsible duties; his willingness to quit the great seal; the imminent risk there was of his not again sitting in that place; the uncertainty of all the tenures by which official life is held; and even the arrival of that season when it became him to prepare for a yet more awful change; and the hearer, who knew the speaker, felt here an intimate persuasion, that the most religious of mortals could not have named the great debt of nature with more touching sincerity, or employed an expression more calculated to convey that

feeling of dread. Such were the songs of the swan when the waters were a mirror, and there was no fear of dissolution. But in foul weather, the instant that peril approached, be the black cloud on the very verge of the horizon, and but the size of a man's hand, all these notes were hushed, and a front was assumed, as if the great seal had been given to him for life, with the power to name his successor by any writing under his hand, or by parole before a single witness. In like manner, when the interests of suitors required despatch, when causes had been heard by the hour and by the day, and all the efforts of the judge to coax the advocate into greater prolixity had been exhausted, the dreaded moment of decision came, but brought only hesitation, doubt, delay. So, too, when common matters occurred in parliament, and no kind of importance could be attached to the adoption of one course rather than another, bless us! what inexhaustible suggestions of difficulty, what endless effusion of conflicting views, what a rich mine of mock diamonds, all glittering and worthless, in the shape of reasons on all sides of a question, never worth the trouble of asking, and which none but this great magician would stop to resolve! So, again, in the council—when there was no danger of any kind, and it signified not a straw what was done, the day, had it been lengthened out by the sun being made to stand still, while our Joshua slew all the men in Buckram that he conjured up, would yet have been all too short to state and to solve his difficulties about nothing! But let there come any real embarrassment, any substantial peril, which required a bold and vigorous act to ward it off; let there but be occasion, for nerves to work through a crisis, which it asked no common boldness to face at all; let there arise some new and strange combination of circumstances, which, governed by no precedent, must be met by unprecedented measures—and no man that ever sat at a council board more quickly made up his mind, or more gallantly performed his part. Be the act mild or harsh, moderate or violent, sanctioned by the law and constitution, or an open outrage upon both, he was heard indeed to wail and

groan much of painful necessity—often vowed to God—spoke largely of conscience—complained bitterly of a hard lot—but the paramount sense of duty overcame all other feelings; and, with wailing and with tears, beating his breast, and only not tearing his hair, he did, in the twinkling of an eye, the act which unexpectedly discomfited his adversaries, and secured his own power for ever. He who would adjourn a private road or estate bill for weeks, unable to make up his mind on one of its clauses, or take a month to determine on what terms some amendment should be allowed in a suit, could, without one moment's hesitation, resolve to give the king's consent to the making of laws, when he was in such a state of mental disease, that the keeper of his person could not be suffered to quit the royal closet for an instant, while his patient was with the keeper of his conscience performing the highest functions of sovereignty!

With all these apparent discrepancies between Lord Eldon's outward and inward man, nothing could be more incorrect than to represent him as tainted with hypocrisy, in the ordinary sense of the word. He had imbibed from his youth, and in the orthodox bowers which Isis waters, the dogmas or the tory creed in all their purity and rigour. By these dogmas he abided through his whole life, with a steadfastness, and even at a sacrifice of power; which sets at defiance all attempts to question their perfect sincerity. Such as he was when he left Oxford, such he continued above sixty years after, to the close of his long and prosperous life;—the enemy of all reform, the champion of the throne and the altar, and confounding every abuse that surrounded the one or grew up within the precincts of the other, with the institutions themselves; alike the determined enemy of all who would either invade the institution or root up the abuse.

To the confidence, as to the society of the princess, this remarkable person was recommended, not more by the extraordinary fertility of his resources as a counselor in difficult emergencies, than by his singular powers of pleasing in the intercourse of private life. For his

manners were rendered peculiarly attractive by the charm of constant good humour; and his conversation, if not so classical and refined as that of his brother, Sir William Scott, and somewhat soiled with the rust of professional society and legal habits, was nevertheless lively and entertaining in a very high degree.

With him was joined another member of the same profession, incomparably less eminent in that way, in most other respects his inferior, but still a person of great ability, the late Mr. Perceval. Though formed in the same legal school, these men were exceedingly different from, and in many respects the opposite of each other. Mr. Perceval was a man of very quick parts, much energy of character, dauntless courage, joined to patient industry, practised fluency as a speaker, great skill and readiness as a debater; but of no information beyond what a classical education gives the common run of English youths. Of views upon all subjects the most narrow, upon religious and even political questions the most bigoted and intolerant, his range of mental vision was confined in proportion to his ignorance on all general subjects. Within that sphere he saw with extreme acuteness,—as the mole is supposed to be more sharp-sighted than the eagle for half a quarter of an inch before it; but as beyond the limits of his little horizon he saw no better than the mole, so like her, he firmly believed, and always acted on the belief, that beyond what he could descry nothing whatever existed; and he mistrusted, dreaded, and even hated all who had an ampler visual range than himself. But here, unhappily, all likeness ceases between the puny animal and the powerful statesman. Beside the manifest sincerity of his convictions, attested by his violence and rancour, he possessed many qualities, both of the head and the heart, which strongly recommended him to the confidence of the English people. He never scared them by refinements, nor alarmed their fears by any sympathy with improvements out of the old and beaten track; and he shared largely in all their favourite national prejudices. A devoted adherent of the crown, and a pious son of the church, he was dear to all who celebrate their revels

by libations to church and king—most of whom regard the clergy as of far more importance than the gospel—all of whom are well enough disposed to set the monarch above the law. Add to this, the accidental qualification of high birth, in a family excessively attached to the court and the establishment, and still more the real virtues which adorned his character—a domestic life without stain—and exemplary discharge of the duties that devolve on the father of a numerous family—a punctual performance of all his obligations—a temper which, though quick and even irritable, was generally good—a disposition charitable and kind where the rancour of party or sect left his nature free scope. From all sordid feelings he was entirely exempt—regardless of pecuniary interests—careless of mere fortune—aiming at power alone—and only suffering his ambition to be restrained by its intermixture with his fiery zeal for the success of his cherished principles, religious and civil. The whole character thus formed, whether intellectual or moral, was eminently fitted to command the respect and win the favour of a nation whose prejudices are numerous and deep-rooted, and whose regard for the decencies of private life readily accepts a strict observance of them as a substitute for almost any political defect, and a compensation for many political crimes.

The two eminent men, whose habits we have been contemplating, differed from one another far less than both differed from the third. Mr. Canning was, in all respects, one of the most remarkable persons who have lived in our times. Born with talents of the highest order, these had been cultivated with an assiduity and success which placed him in the first rank among the most accomplished scholars of his day; and he was only inferior to others in the walks of science, from the accident of the studies which Oxford cherished in his time being pointed almost exclusively to classical pursuits. But he was any thing rather than a mere scholar. In him were combined, with a rich profusion, the most lively original fancy—a happily retentive and ready memory—singular powers of lucid statement—and occasional wit in all its varieties, now biting and sarcas-

tic, to overwhelm an antagonist, now pungent or giving point to an argument, now playful for mere amusement, and bringing relief to a tedious statement, or lending a charm to dry chains of close reasoning. "Erant ea in Philippo quæ, qui sine comparatione illorum spectaret, satis magna dixerit; summa libertas in oratione, multæ facetiæ; satis creber in reprehendendis, solutus in explicandis sententiis; erat etiam in primis, ut temporibus illis, Græcis doctrinis institutus, in altercando cum aliquo aculeo et maledicto facetius."—(Cic *Brutus*.) Superficial observers, dazzled by this brilliancy, and by its sometimes being over-indulged, committed their accustomed mistake; and supposed that he who could thus adorn his subject was an amusing speaker only, while he was helping on the argument at every step,—often making skilful statements perform the office of reasoning, and oftener still seeming to be witty when he was merely exposing the weakness of hostile positions, and thus taking them by the artillery of his wit. But in truth his powers of ordinary reasoning were of a very high order, and could not be excelled by the most practised masters of dialectics. It was rather in the deep and full measure of impassioned declamation, in its legitimate combination with rapid argument—the highest reach of oratory—that he failed; and this he rarely attempted. Of his powers of argumentation, his capacity for the pursuits of abstract science, his genius for adorning the least attractive subjects, there remains an imperishable record in his celebrated speeches upon the "Currency," of all his efforts the most brilliant and the most happy.

This great man was the slave of no mean or paltry passions, but a lofty ambition inspired him; and had he not too early become trained to official habits, he would have avoided the distinguishing error of his life—an impression which clung to him from the desk—that no one can usefully serve his country, or effectually farther his principles, unless he possesses the power which place alone bestows. The traces of this belief are to be seen in many of the most remarkable passages of his life; and it even appears in the song with which he celebrated

the praise of his illustrious leader and friend; for he treats as a fall his sacrificing power to principle, at a time when by retiring from office, Mr. Pitt had earned the applause of millions. Mr. Canning himself gave an example yet more signal of abandoning office rather than tarnish his fame; and no act of his life can be cited which sheds a greater lustre on his memory.

In private society he was singularly amiable and attractive, though, except for a very few years of his early youth, he rarely frequented the circles of society, confining his intercourse to an extremely small number of warmly attached friends.* In all the relations of domestic life he was blameless, and was the delight of his family, as in them he placed his own.† His temper, though naturally irritable and uneasy, had nothing paltry or spiteful in it; and as no one better knew how and when to resent an injury, so none could more readily or more gracefully forgive.

It is supposed that from his early acquaintance with Mr. Sheridan and one or two other whigs, he originally had a leaning towards that side of the question. But he entered into public life, at a very early age, under the auspices of Mr. Pitt, to whom he continued steadily attached till his death; accompanying him when he retired from power, and again quitting office upon his decease. His principles were throughout those of a liberal tory, above the prejudices of the bigots who have rendered toryism ridiculous, and free from the corruption that

* It is necessary to state this undoubted fact, that the folly of those may be rebuked, who have chosen to represent him as "a great dinner-out." We will answer for it that none of those historians of the day ever once saw him at table.

† It is well known how much more attachment was conceived for his memory by his family and his devoted personal friends, than by his most staunch political adherents. The friendships of statesmen are proverbially of rotten texture; but it is doubtful if ever this rottenness was displayed in a more disgusting manner than when the puny men of whose nostrils he had been the breath, joined his worst enemies as soon as they had laid him in the grave. It was justly said by one hardly even related to him but in open hostility, that "the gallantry of his kindred had rescued his memory from the offices of his friends,"—in allusion to Lord Clanricarde's most powerful and touching appeal on that disgraceful occasion.

has made it hateful. Imbued with a warm attachment to the ancient institutions of the country, somewhat apt to overrate the merits of mere antiquity, from his classical habits and from early association, he nevertheless partook largely in the improved spirit of the age, and adopted all reforms, except such as he conscientiously believed were only dictated by a restless love of change, and could do no good, or such as went too far and threatened revolution. But this was the posture into which his opinions and principles may be said ultimately to have subsided—these the bearings of his mind towards the great objects of political controversy in the station which it finally took when the tempest of French convulsion had ceased, and statesmen were moored in still water. He began his career in the most troublesome period of the storm; and it happened to him, as to all men, that the tone of his sentiments upon state affairs was very much influenced through after times by the events which first awakened his ambition, or directed his earliest pursuit of glory. The atrocities of the French Jacobins, the thoughtless violence of the extreme democratic party in this country, reduced by those atrocities to a small body, the spirit of aggression which the conduct of her neighbours had first roused in France, and which unexampled victories soon raised to a pitch that endangered all national independence—led Mr. Canning, with many others who, naturally were friendly to liberty, into a course of hostility towards all change, because they became accustomed to confound reform with revolution, and to dread nothing so much as the mischief which popular violence had produced in France, and with which the march of French conquests threatened to desolate Europe. Thus it came to pass that the most vigorous and the most active portion of his life was passed in opposing all reforms, in patronising the measures of coercion into which Mr. Pitt had, so unhappily for his fame and for his country, been seduced by the alarms of weak, and by selfish schemes of unprincipled men; and in resisting the attempts which the friends of peace persevered in making, for terminating hostilities so long the curse, and still by

their fruits the bane of his empire. It was not till the end of the war that his natural good sense had its free scope, and he became aware of the difference between reforms, of which he admitted the necessity, and revolution, against all risk of which he anxiously guarded. He had early joined Mr. Pitt on the Catholic question, and, while yet the war raged, he had rendered incalculable service to the cause of emancipation, by devoting to it some of his most brilliant displays in the House of Commons. This, with the accident of a contested election in a great town bringing him more in contact with popular feelings and opinions, contributed to the liberal course of policy on almost all subjects, which he afterwards pursued. Upon one only question he continued firm and unbending; he was the most uncompromising adversary of all parliamentary reform,—resisting even the least change in the representative system, and holding that alteration once begun was fatal to its integrity.* This opposition to reform became the main characteristic of the Canning party, and it regulated their conduct on almost all questions. Before 1831, no exception can be perceived in their hostility to reform, unless their differing with the Duke of Wellington on East Retford can be regarded as such: but, in truth, their avowed reason for supporting that most insignificant measure was, that the danger of a real and effectual reform might thereby be warded off. The friends of Mr. Canning, including Lords Palmerston and Glenelg, who in 1818 had been joined by Lord Melbourne, continued steady to the same principles, until, happily, on the formation of Lord Grey's government they entirely changed their course, and became the advocates, with their reforming colleagues, of a change, compared to which the greatest reforms ever contemplated by Mr. Pitt or Mr. Fox, or denounced by

* During the short period of his brilliant administration, the question of disfranchising a burgh, convicted of gross corruption, gave rise to the only difference between him and Mr. Brougham, who was understood to have greatly contributed towards that junction of the whigs and liberal tories which dissolved and scattered the old and high tory party; and a division took place in which Mr. Canning was defeated.

Mr. Burke and Mr. Canning, hardly deserved to be classed among measures of innovation. No one can pronounce with perfect confidence on the conduct which any statesman would have pursued, had he survived the times in which he flourished. But if such an opinion may ever with safety be formed, it seems to be in the present case; and it would require far more boldness to surmise that Mr. Canning, or even Mr. Huskisson, would have continued in the government after the 1st March, 1831, than to affirm that nothing could ever have induced such an alteration in their most fixed opinions upon so momentous a question.

But while such was the strength of his opinions,— prejudices as to us they seem, on one great subject,— on almost all other matters, whether of foreign or domestic policy, his views were liberal, and suited to the spirit of the age, while he was a firm supporter of the established constitution of the country. If ever man was made for the service and the salvation of a party, Mr. Canning seemed to have been raised up for that of the tories; if ever party committed a fatal error, it was their suffering groundless distrust, and unintelligible dislikes to estrange him from their side. At a time when nothing but his powerful arm could recall unity to their camp and save them from impending destruction, they not merely wilfully kindled the wrath of Achilles, but resolved that he should no longer fight on their side, and determined to throw away their last chance of winning the battle. To him they by general assent preferred Lord Castlereagh as their leader, without a single shining quality except the carriage and manners of high birth; while Mr. Canning, but for his accidental death, would have ended his life as governor of a country where men neither debate, nor write; where eloquence evaporates in scores of paragraphs, and the sparkling of wit and the cadence of rhymes are alike unknown.

Such were the distinguished persons to whom the princess looked for aid, counsel, and comfort, in the season of her first troubles. She was happy, indeed, in the society of others of her own sex. All who have lived in the last half century have learnt to admire and

to esteem the great abilities, the lively wit, and the yet more amiable qualities of the heart which are hereditary in the family of Lord North; but happily one of its most distinguished members survives in the respected person of a noble lady, whose fastidiousness would shrink from any efforts to portray their merits, by a pencil so much less delicate than her own.

Although from the superior attractions of his society, Mr. Canning was a more familiar inmate of the household than his two coadjutors, they were the more active partisans of the princess's cause; and when the investigation of 1807 closed by the report and the censure already mentioned, they prepared for publication an appeal against the injustice and harshness of the whole proceeding. An extreme mystery hangs over this portion of the story; but we believe the fact to be that the work contained statements, which in those days of restricted printing and frequent prosecution, it was judged dangerous for any one to print, and impossible to find a bookseller who would undertake to publish. Certain it is, that the whole was secretly printed at a private press, under the direction of the ex-chancellor and the ex-attorney-general, the law-officers who had brought more libellers to trial, and prepared more penal laws against the press than any others of the successors of Jeffries and of Noy. It was about this time the favourite object of George III. to get rid of the whig ministry. Ever since Mr. Fox's death in September 1806, he had been convinced that the tory party could carry on the government, and had been anxiously waiting for an opportunity of quarrelling with the whigs. But more crafty by far than his well-meaning son, our late king, afterwards proved in similar circumstances, he suffered them to go on, and even to dissolve the parliament and elect a new one; aware how impossible it was to change the ministry without any ground on which he could appeal to the country for support.* While thus watching

* The inextricable difficulties which the late king brought on himself by his foolish and worse than foolish conduct in the year 1834, are fresh in all men's remembrance.

his time, the affair of the princess, whom he had always loved with a genuine warmth of affection, and supported with his wonted strength of purpose, but greatly confirmed by his hatred of her persecutor and slanderer, came to his aid. He resolved to make this the ground of quarrel with the whigs, who were the prince's associates, had taken his part, had conducted the investigation, and presented the offensive report. The strong feelings of the English people, he knew, would be easily roused against the violator of all conjugal duties; and the appeal to English generosity and justice against the partisans of one who violated both in his treatment of a friendless stranger, he felt assured would not be made in vain. There is no doubt whatever that *The Bock*, written by Mr. Perceval, and previously printed at his house under Lord Eldon's superintendence and his own, was prepared in concert with the king, and was intended to sound the alarm against Carlton House and the whigs, when a still more favourable opportunity of making a breach with the latter, unexpectedly offered itself in the Catholic question. The king, with his accustomed quickness and sagacity, at once perceived that this afforded a still more advantageous ground of fighting the battle he had so long wished to join with his enemies. To Lord Eldon and Mr. Perceval nothing could be more suitable or agreeable; the cry against the prince was laid aside for the cry of *No Popery*; and instead of proclaiming conjugal rights to be menaced by the whigs, the church was announced to be in danger from their machinations. The success of this movement is well known, and it laid the cause of the princess out of view for some years.

It is difficult, however, to describe the sensation which the Report of Secret Tribunal had made wherever a knowledge of its contents reached. That a wife, a princess, and a stranger should be subjected to treatment the most cruel and unmanly, should then be driven from the shelter of her husband's roof, should be surrounded by spies and false witnesses, and having been charged with a capital offence—nay, with high treason—should be tried behind her back, with the most able

counsel to attend on behalf of her persecutor and accuser, without a human being present on her behalf, so much as to cross-examine a witness, or even to take a note of the evidence—was a proceeding which struck all men's minds with astonishment and dismay; and seemed rather to approach the mockery of all justice presented in the accounts of Eastern seraglios, than to resemble any thing that is known among nations living under constitutional governments. But if the investigation itself was thus an object of reprobation and disgust, its result gave, if possible, less satisfaction still. What could be said of a sentence which showed that even when tried behind her back, and by an invisible tribunal, formed wholly of her adversaries, not the shadow of guilt could be found in her whole conduct; and that even the mercenary fancies and foul perjuries of the spies had failed to present any probable matter of blame; and yet, instead of at once pronouncing her innocent and unjustly accused, begrudged her the poor satisfaction of an acquittal, and fearful of affording her the triumph to which innocence is entitled, and offending the false accuser, both passed over all mention of her unparalleled wrongs, and left a stigma upon her name, by the vague recommendation that the king should advise her concerning certain levities or indiscretions of behaviour—an allusion so undefined, that any one might fill up the dark outline as his imagination should enable him, or his want of common charity prompt him to do? Every one knew that had there been the least tangible impropriety, though falling far short of guilt, it would have been stated in the Report; but the purposes of the accuser, to which the secret judges lent themselves, were best served by a vague and mysterious generality, that meant every thing, and any thing, as well as nothing, and enabled him to propagate by his hireling favourites, all over society, any new slanders which he might choose to invent.

If, however, the effect thus produced was most injurious to the character of the inquirers, and irrecoverably ruined that of the prince in all honourable minds, the proceedings of the princess's defenders, as soon as

they came to be known, excited on the other hand no little surprise. That two such men as Lord Eldon and Mr. Perceval—the one at the head of the law—the other attorney general, and who now became in effect, though not yet in name, prime minister—that those who had ever held the most rigorous execution of the old laws against the press to be absolutely necessary for the safety of the monarchy, and had been among the chief framers of new measures more rigorous still, should now become the actors in a conspiracy to evade some of those laws, and break others, filled men's minds with unspeakable wonder. A secret printing press had been employed at a private house, for the express purpose of evading the provisions of that act which Lord Eldon had passed, and Mr. Perceval had supported, to prohibit, under severe penalties, any one from printing any thing whatsoever, without appending to it his name and place of abode. They had written, and in this clandestine fashion had printed, thousands of a work which, though now-a-days far less libellous than almost every day's papers that are read one hour and pass the next, with impunity into oblivion, was yet in those times equal to the most daring libels; and all this they had done for the purpose of blackening the character of the heir-apparent to the throne. This passage sunk deep into the public mind, and was esteemed an illustration on the one hand of the lengths to which party will carry very upright and prudent men, as well as of the hardships under which the law of libel places authors and publishers, and of their effects in fettering the discussion of every question which justice requires to be freely handled. For it was observed that while the defence of the innocent party could not be undertaken without the greatest risk, the wrong doer and all the parasite accusers were altogether safe in their attacks upon her character, through every channel of private communication, and even in these mysterious allusions through the press, too flimsy to be reached by the law, though quite significant enough to be injurious to their object, and the more hurtful for the very reason that they were so vague and so obscure.

The confirmed insanity of the king, three years afterwards, called to the regency the chief actor in these unhappy scenes. No prince ever ascended the throne with so universal a feeling of distrust, and even aversion. Nor was this lessened when the first act of his reign proved him as faithless to his political friends as he had been to his wife; and as regardless to his professed public principles as he had been of his marriage vows. It added little respect to the dis-esteem in which he was so universally held, that he was seen to discard all the liberal party with whom he had so long acted, and with whom, after an interval of separation, he had become again intimately united, and among them the very men who had stood by him in his domestic broils; whilst he took into full favour his determined enemies, and, worst of all, the very men who had secretly printed libels against him too outrageous to find a publisher!

The accession of the princess's friends to the regent's favour was the period of their intercourse with their former client. Not the slightest communication could now be held with her whose just quarrel they had so warmly espoused while the prince was their antagonist; and Mr. Canning alone of them all, to his transcendent honour, refused to pay the tribute exacted by the court of deserting a former friend, because an enemy had been found placable; and because he, setting too high a value upon his forgiveness, required his new favourites to be as perfidious as himself.

In 1813, the princess, unable any longer to bear the separation from her daughter; who was now grown up, and of whom she was daily allowed to see less and less, addressed to the regent that celebrated Letter, which the silly and ignorant author of the contemptible, but malignant work before us loads with praises, while wholly unable to understand it, and then publishes at length, with the most absurd and misplaced censures; being perfectly ignorant that the letter which she thus reviles as being all it should not have been, is the self same letter she had, a few pages before, held up as the universally admitted model of what the occasion required, and as the very perfection of all it should be. The reception

of this letter by the prince was singular, and it was every way characteristic of his little mind. He directed Lord Liverpool to notify that he could not receive nor read it, and that all communications of the wife to the husband must be addressed to the minister, as if that lord were the servant of the consort as well as of the prince. Thus it was supposed that a cunning way had been devised of avoiding the difficult task of giving the letter and remonstrance any answer. The people, however, eagerly read this document, and greedily devoured its contents. But one opinion of reprobation was expressed—one feeling of disgust entertained—and one voice of indignation raised against the new and unheard-of cruelty, by which a wife, forcibly ejected from her husband's house, only because her presence was a reproach and an interruption to his libertine life, was now to be farther deprived of her only child's society, without the shadow of a reason being assigned; and the sympathy thus universally excited with the mother's feelings was powerfully awakened in the daughter's behalf also; when it became certain that neither the high rank of the parties, nor the pains taken to estrange them from each other, had stifled in the breast of Princess Charlotte the strongest feelings of her nature. She all her life, indeed, had been and continued sincerely attached to her mother, and soon after showed how little industrious slander had prevailed over her unalterable confidence in the probity, as well as the tender affection of that parent. She was a person of great abilities, tolerably well cultivated; to the quickness of her mother, she united more deliberate judgment; and she inherited her resolute courage and determination of character. She had a temper violent and irascible, which neither her own efforts nor those of her preceptors had been able to tame; but there was nothing mean, spiteful, or revengeful in her disposition; while her mother's easy nature, her freedom from all pride and affectation, her warmth of affection, her playfulness of manner,—though such severe judges as those of the Whig Secret Tribunal in 1806 might have termed them the overt-acts of levity, and visited them with a reprimand only capable of provoking laughter in its object,

were yet calculated to shed a singular lustre over so exalted a station, and made the character of her whom they adorned, peculiarly attractive. These two great ladies were not more united by mutual attachment than by the similarity of their tastes—both fond of reading—cultivators of the fine arts—and in one, that of sculpture, no mean proficient.

But they were doomed to be separated, that the caprice of their common tyrant might be gratified; and the letter which he had, with unparalleled folly, refused to read, or rather to answer, being suffered to circulate through the whole country unanswered, produced the strongest effect in their favour, and against him. Accordingly, the mistake which had been committed was discovered too late. Any answer of an ordinary kind would have proved altogether unavailing; defence there was none, nor was any justification whatever attempted of the treachery universally cried out against. The resolution was, therefore, taken to try the effect of recrimination, and it was determined to bring out against the princess as much of Mr. Perceval's book against the prince as contained the particulars of the evidence which had been given before the invisible tribunal in 1806. The fate of this odious manœuvre was sufficiently striking; never was spite and falsehood visited with more speedy or more complete discomfiture. For three days the whole of the newspapers were filled with the most offensive details of a pregnancy and delivery—the public taste was outraged—the public mind was disgusted—but the public feelings were roused, and they were found, as usual, to be pointed in the right direction—the whole charges were pronounced an absolute fabrication, and the accused stood higher than before, though it was not possible for any thing to sink her accuser lower. It may be observed, that in the interval between the secret printing of Mr. Perceval's work, and this new attack on the Princess of Wales, the affair of the Duke of York had materially obstructed the execution of the law of libel; and had made almost any discussion, however free, of the royal family's conduct, much more safe than they had formerly been. That

affair had also at one time produced a salutary effect upon the demeanour of the family itself. The king had, it is said, called the members of it together, and pointing out to them the dangers of their situation, loaded as they now were, with popular odium, and become the objects of general suspicion, and all their actions narrowly and jealously watched, had besought them so to alter their conduct as to allay those feelings most perilous to the stability of the monarchy, and, above all, to shun as well intrigues as quarrels amongst themselves. Had George III. lived longer in possession of his faculties and his power, there cannot be any doubt that the almost superstitious awe with which he was approached by all his children, would have had the salutary effect of enforcing the observance of this wise and provident injunction.

The public attention, thus painfully excited, could not be long kept on the stretch, and in a few months the affairs of the royal family were forgotten. The aversion towards the regent had been increased by these disclosures, although it was impossible to lessen the respect in which the country held him; and the ill-treatment of the Princess of Wales and of his daughter were the themes of universal commiseration as often as their names were mentioned; but men ceased to think of the subject, and the public attention was for some time, very naturally, engrossed by the successes which closed the war and overthrew Napoleon. In the summer of 1814, however, an incident occurred of an extraordinary nature, and by which the whole interest of the last year's controversy was suddenly revived. The Princess Charlotte, wearied out by a series of acts all proceeding from the spirit of petty tyranny, and each more vexatious than another, though none of them very important in itself, was in the state of irritation which such treatment is fitted to excite in one of her age, station and temper, when a sudden order to change her chief attendants filled up the measure of vexation, and passed her powers of endurance. In a fine evening of July, about the hour of seven, when the streets are deserted by all persons of condition, she rushed out of her residence in

Warwick House, unattended; hastily crossed Cockspur street; flung herself into the first hackney-coach she could find; and drove to her mother's house in Connaught place. The Princess of Wales having gone to pass the day at her Blackheath villa, a messenger was despatched for her, another for her law adviser Mr. Brougham, and a third for Miss Mercer Elphinstone, the young princess's bosom friend. He arrived before the Princess of Wales had returned: and Miss Mercer Elphinstone had alone obeyed the summons. Soon after the royal mother came, accompanied by Lady Charlotte Lindsay, her lady in waiting. It was found that the Princess Charlotte's fixed resolution was to leave her father's house, and that which he had appointed for her residence, and to live thenceforth with her mother. But Mr. Brougham is understood to have felt himself under the painful necessity of explaining to her that by the law, as all the twelve judges but one had laid it down in George I.'s reign, and as it was now admitted to be settled, the king or the regent had the absolute power to dispose of the persons of all the royal family, while under age. The Duke of Sussex, who had always taken her part, was sent for, and attended the invitation to join in these consultations. It was an untoward incident in this remarkable affair that he had never seen the Princess of Wales since the investigation of 1806, which had begun upon a false charge brought by the wife of one of his equerries, and that he had, without any kind of warrant from the fact, been supposed by the princess to have set on, or at least supported the accuser. He, however, warmly joined in the whole of the deliberations of that singular night. As soon as the flight of the young lady was ascertained, and the place of her retreat discovered, the regent's officers of state and other functionaries were despatched after her. The Lord Chancellor Eldon first arrived, but not in any particularly imposing state "regard being had"* to his eminent station; for, indeed, he came in a hackney-coach. Whether it was that the example of the Princess Char-

* The well-known habitual expression of Lord Eldon.

lotte herself, had for the day brought this simple and economical mode of conveyance into fashion, or that concealment was much studied, or that despatch was deemed more essential than ceremony and pomp—certain it is that all who came including the Duke of York, arrived in similar vehicles, and that some remained enclosed in them, without entering the royal mansion. At length, after much pains and many entreaties used by the Duke of Sussex and the Princess of Wales herself, as well as Miss Mercer and Lady C. Lindsay (whom she always honoured with a just regard) to enforce the advice given by Mr. Brougham that she should return without delay to her own residence, and submit to the regent, the young princess, accompanied by the Duke of York and her governess, who had now been sent for and arrived in a royal carriage, returned to Warwick House, between four and five o'clock in the morning. There was then a Westminster election in progress in consequence of Lord Cochrane's expulsion; and it is said that on her complaining to Mr. Brougham that he, too, was deserting her and leaving her in her father's power when the people would have stood by her—he took her to the window, when the morning had just dawned, and pointing to the park and the spacious streets which lay before her, said that he had only to show her a few hours later, on the spot she now stood, and all the people of this vast metropolis would be gathered together on that plain, with one common feeling in her behalf—but that the triumph of one hour would be dearly purchased by the consequences which must assuredly follow in the next, when the troops poured in and quelled all resistance to the clear and undoubted law of the land, with the certain effusion of blood—nay, that through the rest of her life she never would escape the odium which, in this country, always attends those who, by breaking the law occasion such calamities. This consideration, much more than any quailing of her dauntless spirit, or faltering of her filial affection, is believed to have weighed upon her mind, and induced her to return home.

There had, however, been a treaty for some time

pending, the object of which was her marriage with the King of Holland's eldest son—a match as unwise on public grounds as it was unpalatable to her own taste. She had set herself decidedly against it, and was apprehensive of being drawn or driven into it by the systematic course of ill-usage recently employed against her. It was even supposed by some, and indeed rather insinuated by herself, that the principal reason for leaving Warwick House had been to disentangle herself at once from the trammels of this negotiation. And it is certain that, before she would consent to return, she directed a declaration to be drawn up, which was signed by all present, in which was used remarkable expressions, to the following effect: “I am resolved never to marry the Prince of Orange. If it shall be seen that such a match is announced, I wish this, my declaration, to be borne in mind, that it will be a marriage without my consent and against my will; and I desire Augustus (Duke of Sussex) and Mr. Brougham will particularly take notice of this.”

No farther attempts were made to enforce the hated marriage; but the Duke of Sussex's supposed share in breaking it off was never forgiven. The regent immediately called together the different members of the family; and announced that they must make their election between himself and the duke—whoever refused to give up the society of the latter being warned that he gave up all intercourse with the regent. It is most creditable to the Duke of Gloucester that this honest and excellent man at once rejected the insulting and humiliating proposition. Nor was he visited with the awful penalty in consequence. On the contrary, he soon after married the regent's favourite sister, the most distinguished of the family, and ever enjoyed his favour, as he had commanded his respect.

The presence of the allied sovereigns after the termination of the war overjoyed the people of London, amused the court, occupied the press, and furnished a new and grateful occasion to the regent of annoying his consort. Every engine of intrigue was set in motion to obtain from these royal strangers and acquies-

cence in that neglect of the Princess of Wales, which all good courtiers of our own country knew to be the surest road to her illustrious husband's favour. It seemed as if the whole object of the regent's policy was to prevent every mark even of the most common place civility, from being bestowed upon her whom he had vowed to protect and to cherish, and whose position as his wife might have made so vain and selfish a being suppose was the cause of whatever attentions she should receive from his guests. He was successful in this negotiation; and none of the princes, not even those most nearly connected with herself by the ties of blood or of affinity, ventured to incur the displeasure of Carlton House by any indication that they were aware of her existence.

A court was now held by the Queen Mother; and the Princess of Wales having been the object of her royal consort's unceasing affection and steady protection, to the last hour that his faculties remained entire, it might have been supposed that one who affected never to have known any law through life but his will, could hardly have turned against the cherished object of his care, and meanly sided with her persecutors. Queen Charlotte was a woman of the most ordinary size of understanding, of exceedingly sordid propensities, of manners and disposition that rendered her peculiarly unamiable, of a person so plain as at once to defy all possible suspicion of infidelity, and to enhance the virtue by increasing the difficulty of her husband's undeviating constancy to her bed. Her virtue was so much accompanied with superfluous starchiness and prudery, that it set the feelings of respect and sympathy on edge; and though her regularity of life was undeviating, the dulness of her society, the stiffness of her demeanour, the narrowness of her soul, tended to make respectable conduct as little attractive as possible, and rather to scare away from morality than to entice the beholder. Of a nature rigorously parsimonious, the slave besides of inordinate avarice, she redeemed not this hateful meanness by any of those higher qualities of prudence and practical sense which are not unfrequently seen in its company. Her

spirit, too, was obstinate, and not untinged with spite; she was unforgiving; she was not undesigning; she could mingle in the intrigues of a court, as well as feel its malignities; and her pride knew no bounds,—combining the speculative aristocracy of a petty German court with the more practical haughtiness which is peculiar to the patrician blood of this free country. Of the Prince of Wales she never had been a friend until he became regent, when she became his tool and his slave. On the contrary, she had on all occasions partaken of her husband's hatred of him, and had been as ready an accomplice in his mal-treatment of her first born child, as she now made herself the submissive and willing instrument of injury to his wife—his cousin and her own niece. The visitation of God which substituted that son for his father on the throne, altered the whole face of affairs in the eyes of this unamiable female; who seems to have been raised up as a remarkable proof how little one may be either respected or beloved, for being above reproach as regards the quality sometimes supposed to comprise all female virtue, and which indeed is familiarly allowed to engross the name. To gratify the regent's paltry spite she now refused even to receive her daughter-in-law at that court where she might any day have become her successor; and the populace, moved with just indignation at the behaviour of this very disagreeable personage, loaded her with every offensive expression, and even with more substantial symbols of an extravagant disgust, while she was on her way to hold the court where she meekly submitted to exclude the princess.

These things now attracted the notice, and secured the interposition of parliament; and the queen and her son had the mortification to find that all the influence of the crown, and all the intrigues of the court—all the base fears of some, and the parasitical expectation of others—could not screen their conduct from just animadversion; nor prevent the victim of their persecution from obtaining a mark of sympathy on the part of the people's representatives. A large addition to her income was immediately voted; and, worn out with ill-usage, she, in an evil hour, and contrary to the

strong advice, and in spite of the anxious remonstrances of her advisers, Mr. Whitbread and Mr. Brougham, quitted the country, and devoted herself to foreign travel.

After sketching, with a feeble certainty, but as surely with a faithful pencil, the characters of her tory counsellors, it would be improper to pass over that of the eminent and excellent person whom we have first named, and whose premature loss his country has had such cause to deplore. Of a singularly masculine understanding: of faculties which were rather effective from their strength, than admirable for their refinement; persevering and laborious beyond the nature, and contrary to the self-indulgent habits of aristocratic statesmen; actuated by an ambition not without some considerable preponderance of vanity; of integrity the most uncompromising; inflexibly steady to his purpose. an ardent lover of liberty, a sworn enemy to all oppression; of manners plain, open, manly, sincere; of affections warm and mild as a woman's; generous beyond even the measure of his ample wealth; in every relation of life, whether as a relation, a connexion, or a friend, exemplary almost without a parallel,—Mr. Whitbread presented to the regard and respect of his country one of the most finished specimens of an English statesman, and an English gentleman not of the patrician order; and his public life was that of a truly useful as well as a powerful and consistent patriot. Although his education had been most liberal, and extended by foreign travel, these advantages and the familiar society of the most accomplished political leaders, had not succeeded in refining his taste, any more than it had prevailed over his natural purity, or tamed down to an aristocratic standard the unbending sturdiness of his principles. His speeches were fraught with all that strong sense, a powerful apprehension, a persevering industry in grappling with details could give; while his manner, homely, impressive, admirably suited to his cast of speaking, never once offended the most fastidious critic, whom yet those more ambitious efforts which were foreign to the nature of his oratory, upon some great occasions, were

calculated to repulse. His uniform adherence to his principles, the resolute independence with which on all occasions he declared them, his determined refusal to make any compromise for court favour, or even for party purposes, gained and procured for him the undiminished confidence of his country; and all good men felt that in losing him they lost one of their safest counsellors, most efficient supporters, and most trustworthy friends. Into his hands, and those of his political ally and personal friend, Mr. Brougham, the Princess of Wales had thrown herself from the time that the acquisition of the regent's confidence had estranged Lord Eldon and Mr. Perceval from her society. After extricating her from many difficulties, and carrying her controversy to a triumphant conclusion in July, 1814, their fate was that of many other advisers, to see all their exertions thrown away, by their counsels being rejected on the greatest and most trying emergency of all. Her royal highness went abroad, after they had warned her that they could no longer answer her for her safety if she continued among foreigners, and under the dominion of foreign princes.

It is unhappily but too well known how prophetic these warnings proved, and Mr. Brougham referred to them in 1820 while commenting on the perjured evidence brought forward to consummate her destruction. "Therefore it was," said he, "and foresceing all these fatal consequences of a foreign residence, that years ago I told her majesty and her illustrious daughter, in a letter yet extant, how willingly I would answer with my head for the safety of both in this country, but how impossible it was to feel secure for an hour, if either should go abroad, abandoning the protection which the character of the people, still more than the justice of the law in England, throws around all its inhabitants." Yet it seemed as if, while the daughter lived, the mother was safe; and even after her decease, although machinations were actively set in motion against her, until her steady friend, George III., breathed his last, no active steps were pursued to her undoing. But it was

a striking fact, that the day which saw the father's remains consigned to the tomb, ushered in the ringleader of the Italian witnesses to a private interview in the palace of the son.

The history of the Milan Commission is fresh in the recollection of all. A board of three persons—a Chancery lawyer, who had never seen a witness examined, and whose practice was chiefly confined to cases in bankruptcy, on which he had written an excellent book—a colonel in the army, who knew but little more of the matter—an active and clever attorney—composed this select body, commissioned to hunt for evidence which might convict the future queen, and be ready to overwhelm her if she asserted her right to share her consort's throne.

Sir John Leach was an active adviser of all these nefarious proceedings; nor could all England, certainly not all its bar, have produced a more unsafe counsellor. With great quickness of parts—an extraordinary power of fixing his attention upon an argument—and following steadily its details—a rare faculty of neat and lucid statement, even of the most entangled and complicated facts—considerable knowledge of legal principles, and still greater acquaintance with equity practice—he was singularly ignorant of the world; and had no kind of familiarity with the rules or the practice of evidence in the courts of common or of criminal law.* Moderately learned even in his own profession, beyond it he was one of the most ignorant men that ever appeared at the bar. Yet, by industry, and some art of gaining favour, by making himself useful to the powerful and the wealthy, little scrupulous how much he risked in any way to serve them, he had struggled with the defects of a mean birth and late adoption into the rank he afterwards so greatly affected; and he arrived at extensive practice. “Nullum ille poetam noverat, nullum legerat oratorem nullam memoriam antiquitatis collegerat: non publicum jus, non privatum et civile² cognoverat. Is omnibus exemplo debet esse quantum in hac urbe polleat

* Equity, *jus prætorium*, is not very clearly here excluded.

multorum obedire tempori, multorumque vel honori, vel periculo servire. His enim rebus, infimo loco natus, et honore et pecuniam, et gratiam consecutus, etiam in patronorum sime doctrinâ, sine ingenio, aliquem numerum pervenerat." (Cic. *Brutus*.) The power of deciding causes, which he showed when raised to the bench, was favourably contrasted with the dilatory and doubting habits of Lord Eldon; but there was much of what Lord Bacon calls "affected despatch" in his proceedings; and while he appeared to regard the number of judgments which he pronounced in a given time far more than their quality, he left it to his learned chief to complain that cases were decided at the Rolls, but heard when they came by appeal before the chancellor; while the wits calling one the court of *oyer sans terminer*, named the other that of *terminer sans oyer*; and a great and candid critic (Sir S. Romilly) professed himself, to Lord Eldon's extreme delight, better pleased with the tardy justice of the principal, than with the swift injustice of the deputy. The ridicule which he threw around his conduct in society, by his childish devotion to the pursuits of fashionable life, in which neither his early habits nor his turn of mind fitted him to excel, was another result derived from the same want of sound judgment. But its worst fruit was that unhesitating and overweening confidence in his own opinion, which exceeded that of any other man, and perpetually led both himself and his clients astray. Uncontrolled conceit, a contracted understanding that saw quickly and correctly very near objects, and disbelieved in the existence of all beyond, conspired with a temper peculiarly irascible, in giving him this habit of forming his opinion instantaneously, and this pertinacity in adhering to it—excluding all the light that could afterwards be let in upon the subject. The same hasty and sanguine temperament made him exceedingly prone to see matters as he wished them to be; and when he had a client whom he desired to gratify, or for whom he felt a strong interest, his advice became doubly dangerous; because, in addition to his ordinary infirmities of judgment, he formed his opinion under all the bias of his wishes, while he gave

it and adhered to it without running any hazard in his own person. His courage, both personal and political, was frequently commended; but there may be some doubt if to the latter praise he was justly entitled. His personal gallantry, indeed, was quite unquestionable, and it was severely tried in the painful surgical operations to which he submitted with an ease which showed the risk and the suffering cost him little. But the peculiarity of his character that made him so wise in his own conceit, and lessened the value of his councils, also detracted much from the merit of his moral courage, by keeping him blind to the difficulties and the dangers, the presence or the approach of which could be discovered by all eyes but his own.

Such was the counsellor whom the regent trusted, and who was as sure to mislead him as ever man was that undertook to advise another. The wishes of his great client were well known to him; his disrelish for the caution, and the doubts, and the fears of Lord Eldon had been oftentimes freely expressed; Sir John Leach easily saw every part of the case as the regent wished—quickly made up his mind on the pleasing side—set himself in the same advantageous contrast with the chancellor on this, as he delighted to do on more ordinary occasions—and because he perceived that he delighted the royal consultor at present, never doubted that his successful conduct of the affair would enable him to supplant his superior, and to clutch the Great Seal itself.—The possibility of royal ingratitude never entered his narrow mind; any more than that of his own opinion being erroneous; nor did he conceive it within the nature of things, that in one respect the client should resemble his adviser, namely, in retaining his predilection only so long as measures were found to succeed, and in making the counsellor responsible in his own person for the failure of all from whom any thing had ever been expected. Under these hopeful auspices, the most difficult and delicate affair ever yet undertaken by statesmen, was approached; and while, under the sanguine counsels of Sir John, no one of the conspirators ever thought of questioning the success of the case.

another question was just as little asked among them, which yet was by far the most important of all,—Whether, supposing the case proved against the princess, the conspirators were one hair's-breadth nearer the mark of effecting her ruin, or whether that first success would not bring them nearer to their own. The Milan Commission proceeded under this superintendence; and as its labours, so were its fruits exactly what might have been expected. It is the first impression always arising from any work undertaken by English hands and paid for by English money, that an inexhaustible fund is employed and with boundless profusion; and a thirst of gold is straightway excited which no extravagance of liberality can slake. The knowledge that a board was sitting to collect evidence against the queen, immediately gave such testimony a high value in the market of Italian perjury; and happy was the individual who had ever been in her house or admitted to her presence: his fortune was counted to be made. Nor were they who had viewed her mansion, or had only known the arrangements of her villa, without hopes of sharing the golden prize.—To have even seen her pass and noted who attended her person was a piece of good luck. In short, nothing, however remotely connected with herself, or her family, or her residence, or her habits, was without its value among a poor, a sanguine, and an imaginative people. It is certain that no more ready way of proving a case, like the charge of criminal intercourse, can be found, than to have it first broadly asserted for a fact; because this being once believed, every motion, gesture, and look is at once taken as a proof of the accusation, and the two most innocent of human beings may be overwhelmed with a mass of circumstances, almost all of which, as well as the inferences drawn from them, are really believed to be true by those who recount or record them. As the treachery of servants was the portion of this testimony which bore the highest value, that, of course, was not difficult to procure; and the accusers soon possessed what, in such a case, may most truly be said to be *accusatori maxime optandum*—not, indeed, *confitentes*

reos, but the man-servant of the one, and the maid-servant of the other supposed paramour. Nor can we look back upon these scenes without some little wonder how they should not have added even the *confitem reum*; for surely in a country so fertile of intriguing men and abandoned women,—where false oaths, too, grow naturally, or only with the culture of a gross ignorance and a superstitious faith,—it might have been easy, we should imagine, to find some youth, like Sineatton, in the original Harry the Eighth's time, ready to make his fortune, both in money and female favours, by pretending to have enjoyed the affections of one whose good nature and easy manners made the approach to her person no difficult matter at any time. This defect in the case can only be accounted for by supposing that the production of such a witness before the English public might have appeared somewhat perilous, both to himself and to the cause he was brought to prop with his perjuries. Accordingly, recourse was had to spies, who watched all the parties did, and when they could not find a circumstance, would make one; men who chronicled the dinners and the suppers that were eaten, the walks and the sails that were enjoyed, the arrangements of rooms and the position of bowers, and who, never doubting that these were the occasions and the scenes of endearment and of enjoyment, pretended to have witnessed the one, in order that the other might be supposed; but with that inattention to particulars which Providence has appointed as the snare for the false witness, and the safeguard of innocence, pretended to have seen in such directions as would have required the rays of light to move not straightforward, but round about. Couriers that pried into carriages where the travellers were asleep at gray day-light, or saw in the dusk of dewy eve what their own fancy pictured,—sailors who believe that all persons could gratify their animal appetites on the public deck, where themselves had so often played the beast's part,—lying waiting-women, capable of repaying the kindness and charity that had laid the foundation of their fortune, with the treachery that

could rear it to the height of their sordid desires,—chambermaids the refuse of the streets, and the common food of way-faring licentiousness, whose foul fancy could devour every mark that beds might, but did not, present to their practiced eye,—lechers of either sex, who would fain have gloated over the realities of what their liquorish imagination alone bodied forth,—pimps of hideous aspect, whose prurient glance could penetrate through the key-hole of rooms where the rat shared with the bug the silence of the deserted place,—these were the performers whose exploits the commissioners chronicled, whose narratives they collected, and whose exhibition upon the great stage of the first tribunal of all the earth, they sedulously and zealously prepared by frequent rehearsal. Yet with all these helps to success—with the unlimited supply of fancy and of falsehood which the character of the people furnished; with the very body-servants of the parties hired by their wages, if not bought with a price; such an array could only be produced, as the whole world at once pronounced insufficient to prove any case, and even the most prejudiced of assemblies in the accuser's favour turned from with disgust.

The arrival of the queen in this country, on the accession of George IV., was the signal for proceeding against her. A *green bag* was immediately sent down to the two Houses of Parliament, containing the fruits of the Milanese researches: and a bill of pains and penalties was prepared for her destruction. Such was the proceeding of the court, remarkable enough, certainly in itself—sufficiently prompt—abundantly daring—and, unquestionably, pregnant with grave consequences. The proceeding of the country was more prompt, more decided, and more remarkable still. The people all in one voice demurred to the bill. They said, “Suppose all to be true which her enemies allege—we care not; she was ill-used: she was persecuted; she was turned out of her husband's house; she was denied the rights of a wife as well as of a mother; she was condemned to live the life of a widow and the childless, that he who should have been her comforter

might live the life of an adulterous libertine; and she shall not be trampled down and destroyed to satiate his vengeance or humour his caprice." This was the universal feeling that occupied the country. Had the whole facts as charged been proved by a cloud of unimpeachable witnesses, such would have been the universal verdict of that country, the real jury which was to try this great cause; and so wide of their object would the accusers have found themselves at the very moment when they would have fancied the day their own. This all men of sense and reflection saw; this the ministers saw; this, above all, the sagacious chancellor very clearly saw with the sure and quick eye which served his long and perspicacious head; but this Sir John Leach never could be brought for a moment even to comprehend, acute as he was, nor could his royal friend be made to conceive it; because, though both acute men, they were utterly blinded by the passions that domineered in the royal breast, and the conceited arrogance that inspired the vulgar adviser.

But if the ministers saw all these things, and if they moreover were well aware, as who was not?—that the whole country was excited to a pitch of rage and indignation bordering upon rebellion, and that the struggle, if persisted in against a people firmly resolved to stand between the court and its prey, must hurry them into wide-spreading insurrection—how, it will be asked, was it possible that those ministers—whose hatred of the bill must have been as great as their apprehension of its consequences were grave, and who had not a shadow of an interest in its fate, except that it should be instantly abandoned—could be brought to sanction a proceeding fraught not only with every mischief to the country, but with extremest peril to themselves? The great difficulty of answering this question must be confessed; nor is it lessened by the reflection that at the head of the government in those days, there were men whose prudence was more striking than any other quality; men cautious, unpretending, common-place and loving-place, like Lord Liverpool; weary, cold, circumspect, though of unflinching courage, like Lord Castle-

rough; far-sighted, delighting in seeing all difficulties that existed, and many that did not, like Lord Eldon; above all, so firm-minded a man as the Duke of Wellington,—a man, too, so honourable in all his feelings, and so likely to influence the counsels, if he failed to turn aside the desires of the sovereign. The defenders of the ministers never affected to doubt the mischievous nature of the whole proceeding; they admitted all their opinions to be strongly and decidedly against it; they saw, and confessed that they saw, all the dangers to which it exposed the country; they did not deny that it was the mere personal wish of the king; and that it was the bounden duty, the undoubted interest of his ministers, peremptorily to refuse their assistance to such a wicked and hopeless project; admitting, all the while, that as the bill never could be carried through and executed, all the agitation with which so monstrous an attempt was convulsing the country, had absolutely not a chance of success, in so far as concerned the king's object.—Then, what reason did they assign for the the ministers lending themselves to such an enormity? It seems incredible, but it is true, that the only ground ever hinted at, was the king's fixed determination, and the risk his ministers ran of losing their places if they thwarted him in his favourite pursuit! Yes; as if the loss of office was like the loss of life, and they had no power of refusing, because refusal was death, they crouched to that command rather than yield to which, men of integrity and of firmness, would have faced death itself. It is certain, that had the Duke of Wellington been longer in civil life, and attained his due weight in the counsels of the government, he would have taken this and no other view of the question; but it is equally certain that the ministers at large betrayed the same submissive obedience to their master's will, showed the same dread of facing his displeasure, which unnerves the slaves of the eastern tyrant when his voice echoes through the vaults of the seraglio, or casts them prostrate before his feet, as the scymetar's edge glances in their eye, and the bow-string twangs in their ear!

The course taken by the leading supporters of the

queen rendered the conduct of the government still more despicable. It was early announced by Mr. Brougham in the House of Commons that nothing could be more safe than for the ministers to refuse carrying through the bill, because, if the regent after that, should venture to dismiss them on account of their refusal, no man among their adversaries would venture to take office, from which the former occupants had been driven, for refusing to abandon their duty, and fly in the people's face. The regent at once perceived the tendency of this announcement; and he met it in the only way that could be devised for counteracting that tendency. He gave his ministers to understand, that if he turned them out for refusing to go on with the bill, he should take their adversaries into their places without requiring them to adopt or support it. The contrivance was certainly not without ingenuity; but a little reflection must have satisfied even the most timorous place-holder that he had little to fear from so senseless a resolution, and that as long as the whigs refused to outbid them for the royal favour in the only stock which had any value at Carlton House, support of the bill, there was no chance whatever of their being taken into office on any other terms. There surely must be something in official life as sweet as natural is supposed to be; and something peculiarly horrible to statesmen in the bare possibility of political death—else why this pleasing hope, this fond desire, this longing after longevity—or why this dread of dissolution that makes the soul shrink back upon itself? But in one material particular the two kinds of life and death widely differ. The official's death-bed is not cheered by any hopes of immortality. The world to which he now looks forward is another, but not a better world. He knows full sure that, from the pleasing state of being to which he has been so long used and so fondly clings, he must instantly, on the great change taking place, be plunged into the dreary night of a placeless existence; be cast away with other mournful ghosts on the tempest-beaten coast of opposition: there to wander uncertain of ever again being summoned from that inhospitable shore, or visiting the cheerful glimpses of the courtly day. Hence it is, that while men of ordi-

nary powers are daily seen to meet death in the breach for honour or patriotism, hardly any can be found, even among the foremost men of any age, whose nerves are firm enough to look in the face the termination of official existence; and none but one bereft of his senses ever makes himself a voluntary sacrifice for his principles or his country. The ministers of 1820 numbered not among them any one so void of political reason, as to follow Mr. Canning's noble example; and all were resolved to forego the discharge of every duty, and incur, both then and ever after, the loudest reproaches, rather than put to hazard the existence of the administration.

The people, we have said, in one voice demurred to the bill, and plainly indicated, that if every tittle of the charges against the queen were proved, or were admitted to be true, they would not suffer her to be sacrificed to the rage of one who had no right whatever to complain of her conduct were it ever so bad. But this feeling did not prevent them from also being prepared, in justice towards her character, to take issue upon the fact; and accordingly the trial before the lords was looked to with the most universal and painful anxiety, though with a confidence which nothing could shake. After a strenuous but unavailing attempt to arrest the progress of the measure, and fling out the bill on the first reading, her majesty's counsel, Mr. Brougham, her attorney, and Mr. Denman her solicitor-general, prepared to resist it upon the merits of the case, to meet the evidence of the Milan Commissioners, and to defend their august client from every accusation.* An adjournment of some weeks was allowed the promoters of the measure to prepare their case; the parliament, instead of the usual prorogation, remained sitting, though the commons adjourned from time to time; and the seventeenth of August was fixed for the opening of this extraordinary cause. All that public expectation and anxiety excited to the highest pitch could lend of interest to any trial,

* Her other counsel were Mr. Justice Williams, Mr. Serjeant Wilde, and Dr. Lushington.

was here combined, with the unexampled attendance daily of almost all the peers of the empire, the assistance of all the judges of the land, the constant presence of the commons, a vast concourse of spectators. The queen several times proceeded to the house in state, accompanied by her suite; and occupied a seat near her counsel, but within the bar. The nobles best known to the surrounding multitude, were greeted on their way to and from Westminster with expressions of popular feeling, friendly or hostile, according as they were known to take part with or against her majesty; but on the whole, extraordinary tranquillity prevailed. This was very much owing to the undoubting confidence of a favourable result, which kept possession of the people from the very first; for when the deposition of the chief witness against the queen had proved very detrimental to her case, and her adversaries were exulting before his cross-examination had destroyed his credit, very alarming indications of irritation and rage were perceived, extending from the people to the troops then forming the garrison of the capital. Nor were there wanting those who judged it fortunate for the peace of the empire and the stability of the throne, that so popular a prince and so very determined a man as the Duke of Kent, was not then living to place himself at the head of the queen's party, espoused as that was by the military no less than by the civil portion of the community.

After great and memorable displays of eloquence and professional skill on all sides, it was found that the case had failed entirely; and the bill, which for so many months had agitated the whole country, was at length, on the seventh of November withdrawn. It is said that the advisers of the queen were dissatisfied with the conduct of that party to which they, generally speaking, belonged, the whigs—because these might have much more shortly made an end of the case. There were several periods in the proceeding, which offered the firmest ground for that great and powerful body to act with decisive effect; espousing as it did the right side of the question, but espousing it feebly, and not very consistently. If at any of those points they had made a

strenuous resistance, and refused to proceed farther, though they might have been defeated by a small majority, the conductors of the queen's case would have at once withdrawn from a proceeding which presented daily to the indignant world the spectacle most abhorrent to every right feeling, of justice outraged, no less in form than in substance. Had they retired from this scene of mockery and vexation, the country was so entirely with them, that the lords never would have ventured to proceed in their absence.* But fate ordered it otherwise; the whole case on both sides was exhausted to the very dregs; and the accusation failing, the ministers were fain, on carrying one vote by only a majority of seven, to withdraw their master's bill and leave him to himself. There is every reason to believe that they were too happy to have so good a pretence for sounding a retreat from their hazardous position; and they rested satisfied with allowing the king to continue the same petty warfare of annoyance and insult in which the royal veteran had formerly reaped so many laurels, only refusing him any more bills of attainder.

Under such aggressions upon her peace and the comforts of all her associates and supporters, after a struggle of less than a year, the gallant nature sunk, which had borne up against all neglect, braved the pitiless storms of incessant annoyance, and finally triumphed over the highest perils with which persecution could surround her. The people continued firmly her friend, but the upper classes were, as usual, found unable to face the frowns, or resist the blandishments of the court. As long as the interest of the contest continued, and popular favour could be gained by taking the right side, these aristocratic partisans could defy, or thought they

* The difficulties in which the whig leaders then were placed hardly fell short of those of the ministers. Than Lord Grey's whole conduct nothing could be more noble; whether the powers which he displayed or the honest independence of his demeanour be regarded. But we must restrain ourselves from the subject, so inviting, of sketching that amiable, honourable, and highly gifted person's character—offering such a brilliant contrast to many of whom we have spoken. Long, very long may it be before so irreparable a loss may bring him within the province of history!

could defy, the royal displeasure. But when the excitement had subsided, and no precise object seemed farthered by any more popularity, they were disposed, some to regain lost favour elsewhere, almost all to avoid widening the breach. There would be no use in concealing the truth, were it not already well known; the queen's circle became daily more and more contracted: her cause was as much as ever allowed to be that of right and justice; her husband's conduct that of a tyrant destitute alike of feeling and of honour; but he was powerful, and she was weak; so the sentiment most generally felt was, that the subject was irksome, that it might as well now be dropped, that there were never such atrocities as the prince had committed, nor such balls as he well and wisely gave from time to time—and that if the sense of public duty commanded votes and speeches against the bill, in either House of Parliament, a feeling of what was due to near and dear relatives dictated the private duty of eschewing all that could close against their fashionable families the doors of Carlton House. In this state of the public mind, the resolution of the queen once more to leave a country where her lot had been so wretched, would, upon its being disclosed, have produced very different effects in the various parts of the community. The people would have felt general concern, probably great, perhaps just displeasure: the aristocracy, even its liberal members, would have rejoiced at the removal of an irksome inconvenience. This plan, when on the eve of being carried into execution, was frustrated by her majesty's death. Exhausted by continued and unremitted persecution, and suffering severely by the signal failure of an attempt, ill-devised and worse executed, because planned against the peremptory remonstrances of her law advisers, and executed without any of her accustomed firmness of purpose, she was stricken with a malady that baffled all the resources of the medical art, and expired, after declaring to her chief adviser, in an affecting interview, that she was happy to die, for life had never been to her any enjoyment since her early years, and was now become a heavy burden.

It is remarkable that the extreme fondness for young children which had twice before led her into trouble, should cause her to do the only reprehensible act of her latter days.* The adoption of the sail-maker's child had led to the "delicate investigation," as it was called, of 1806; the delight she took in the child of one of her attendants, when in Italy, was the cause of all the favour which the father enjoyed in her household; and now her love of the child of her chaplain induced her to make room for the parents in her establishment, removing Lord and Lady Hood, whose services during her last persecution had been all that the most devoted attachment could render, and whose rank fitted them for the place according to the strictness of court etiquette. It is matter worthy of observation, that during the three hours of wandering which immediately preceded her decease, the names of any of the persons with whom she had been accused of, improper conduct, never escaped her lips; while she constantly spoke of those children,—a remarkable circumstance, if it be considered that the control of reason and discretion was then wholly withdrawn.

The body of the queen lay in state at her villa near Hammersmith, and was conveyed through the metropolis attended by countless multitudes of the people. The regent was then in Dublin, receiving those expressions of loyal affection in which our Irish fellow-sub-

* In the acts which caused this celebrated princess to be sometimes taxed with the habitual ingratitude of her *caste*, something may always be allowed for inconsistency and want of reflection. A striking instance of this occurred on the defeat of the bill, in 1820. Mr. Brougham waited upon her to announce it, and tender his congratulations. She instantly said that there was a sum of £7000, at Mr. D. Kinnaid's (the banker's) which she desired him to take, and distribute £4000 of it among his learned coadjutors. This he of course refused. Her majesty would take no refusal, but the day after recurred to the subject, and insisted on his laying her commands before the other counsel. They all joined in the respectful refusal. A few weeks after, Mr. Kinnaid suggested that the salaries of her law officers were in arrear, they never having been paid. The sum was under £200, but she peremptorily refused to have it paid off—and both this arrear, and all their other professional emoluments, on the ordinary scale, were first paid after her decease by the treasury, among the other expenses of the cause!

jects so lavishly deal, when they are filled with expectations of thereby gaining some favourite object. Indeed Mr. O'Connell himself, in consideration that money enough had not been spent in providing palaces, headed a proposition for building a mansion by subscription. The ministers, therefore, in their master's absence, and having no orders from him, could only conjecture his wishes and act accordingly. They, therefore, called out the troops to prevent the funeral procession from passing through the city, and a struggle ensued with the people, which ended in the loss of several lives. Except that the funeral was turned aside at Hyde Park, this unjustifiable proceeding produced no effect; for after moving along part of the New Road, it came back and entered the Strand near Temple Bar, so as to traverse the whole city. The inscription upon the coffin, dictated by the queen herself—"Caroline of Brunswick, the Murdered Queen of England"—made some ecclesiastical authorities refuse it admission into the churches, on its way to the port of embarkation, where it arrived, accompanied by the executors,—Mr. Sergeant Wilde and Dr. Lushington, attending the remains of their royal client to the place of her final repose in Brunswick. The indecent haste with which the journey to Harwich was performed, excited indignation in all, surprise in none. Nor was there perhaps ever witnessed a more striking or a more touching scene than the embarkation displayed. Thousands of all ranks thickly covered the beach; the sea, smooth as glass, was alive with boats and vessels of every size, their colours floating half-mast high, as on days consecrated to mourning; the sun shone forth with a brightness which made a contrast to the gloom that shrouded every face; the sound of the guns booming across the water at intervals, impressed the solemnity upon the ear. Captains, grown gray in their country's service, were seen to recall the princess's kindness and charities, whereof they had been the witnesses or the ministers, unable to restrain the tears that poured along their scarred cheeks. At length the crimson coffin was seen slowly to descend from the crowded pier, and the barge that received it wheeled through the

water, while the gorgeous flag of England floated over the remains of the "Murdered Queen," whose sufferings had so powerfully awakened the English people's sympathy, and whose dust they now saw depart from their shores for ever, to mingle with the ashes of an illustrious race of heroes,—smitten with feelings in which it would be vain to deny that a kind of national remorse at her murder exacerbated their deep commiseration for her untimely end.

Let it not be supposed, that in sketching the characters of George IV. and his queen, we have yielded to the feelings of party violence, and while we excused the errors of the injured party, exaggerated the offences of the wrong-doer. The portrait which we have painted of him is undoubtedly one of the darkest shade, and most repulsive form. But the faults which gross injustice alone could pass over without severe reprobation, we have ascribed to their true cause,—the corrupting influence of a courtly education, and habits of unbounded self-indulgence upon a nature originally good; and although the sacred rules of morality forbid us to exonerate from censure even the admitted victim of circumstances so unfriendly to virtue, charity, as well as candour, permit us to add, that those circumstances should bear a far larger share of the reprehension than the individual, who may well claim our pity, while he incurs our censure.

During the anxious period over which we have been passing, the licentiousness of the press had, as might be expected, reached its greatest height; and the most unmeasured attacks upon all the royal family, from the king downwards, were become as familiar as the communications of the Court Circular, or the weekly Gazette of prices and promotions. They thus became also about as harmless, and prosecution was never thought of for a moment. But after the loss of the bill, the vindictive spirit of the regent was turned to the adversaries by whom he had been discomfited; and then was begun a system of constant slander against private as well as public character, which spared women married and unmarried as little as men; and which was certainly never

before equalled in any part of the world. The old predilection for this kind of warfare by which the Prince of Wales's younger days had been inspired, led men's minds to guess the quarter in which this plot against character and against society had been hatched; and it was pretty well understood that he who had formerly paid some thousands of pounds for the damages given against a newspaper to a young lady of rank, rendered obnoxious to him by her virtue, and therefore broadly impeached by the libel, was fully capable of planning and directing the gross and foul slanders which now habitually disfigured a portion of the periodical press. It was remarked, too, that those who patronized this vile species of political warfare, played a very safe game. If their slanders succeeded, their adversaries were lowered, and all public men were sufferers in the end, to the no small benefit of the kingly power. If those slanders wholly failed, then the press was lowered, and its influence diminished, or even destroyed—an advantage still more precious to arbitrary power, because it was the disarming of its most powerful and deadly enemy. There can be little doubt that the latter alternative for a long while was the event which happened. The value and effect of newspaper attacks on individual character has been incalculably lessened; and the influence of the periodical press is now confined to that which the force and the fairness of discussion gives it. The result is, that as an organ of instruction, its power is not at all diminished; it can still warn powerfully against bad measures, and lend an important help in farthering good; but its terrors in the eyes of public men are exceedingly reduced; and they, who would, some twenty years ago, have been staggered by a few invectives, or vexed by a satirical joke, now face the whole artillery, light and heavy, of ridicule and of defamation without ever seeming to flinch.

These remarks, although of general application certainly apply peculiarly to the newspaper press, which has, ever since the queen's case, become not only more unbridled and violent in all attacks upon the measures of government, the institutions of the country, and the

public conduct of public men, but incomparably more licentious in every other respect, and more especially in slanderous attacks upon character. Nor are such attacks confined to the private feelings of public men: they extend to unoffending individuals who never pass the bounds of a secluded life; to the aged who can no longer bear a part in the bustle and contentions of the busy world; to the young whose time for embarking on its troubled waves has not yet come; to women whose sex, and fears, and delicacy, both forbid their meddling with public affairs, and should protect them against the hand of the libeller. The motives from which such attacks proceed are various, but among these the lucre of gain, in one shape or other, holds a very prominent place. If private spite is to be gratified, the dastardly wretch who dares not openly wound his antagonist, knows that for money he can command the pen and the press to serve his purpose, and minister to his revenge. A fraud of the grossest description is thus practised upon the public, and the utmost conceivable injustice is done to the party libelled. No one knows whose venom it is that the newspaper distils. To all appearance it proceeds from the impartial director of public opinion,—the faithful chronicler of passing events,—the calm reasoner on state affairs—who has been moved by the love of justice, or sense of duty, to stoop from his eminence and pronounce sentence, which he also executes, on the offences of an individual. If the real truth were known—if all who read the libel were aware that the real writer is some one who has a grudge against the slandered person—some one whom he has offended in the discharge of his duty—some one who had become his enemy merely because he would not, to oblige him, betray a sacred trust—the arrow would fall harmless, and the infamy rest and settle upon the slanderer alone. Cases have come out in the courts of the most respectable and retired individuals being foully calumniated by some hired libeller, whom a rake had set on because he could not obtain consent to a marriage; or because he owed a sum of money of which repayment was demanded. An instance has been often mentioned of a

great personage being crossed in his illicit amours by the virtue of their object, and revenging himself by making a reverend newspaper editor, whom he indemnified, and had to pay for, charge her with having had a bastard child. So judges are every day calumniated by those against whom, in discharge of their duty, under the obligation of their oaths, they have been obliged to decide causes. But to the public eye it seems as if the force of truth extorted from the impartial editors of papers those remarks which are the base progeny of an illicit union between falsehood and revenge. It is known that one newspaper having come under an engagement to a threatening prosecutor, whom it had libelled, never more to comment on his conduct, evaded the condition of its escape, at the instigation of the secret enemy, by reporting a long *ex parte* statement, which, by a concert between the conductor of the journal and the calumniator, he was to make "before the sitting magistrate," on pretence of what is called "asking his assistance and advice"—a mode of proceeding outraging all justice, and which never would be resorted to, were not the press, with its hundred mouths, ready to record and repeat all that passes behind the back of the party accused, but which makes the press subservient to the malice, or the yet baser designs of every villain who may bear a grudge against his neighbour.

But the most vile considerations of sordid interest are in a yet more hateful form, mingled with the conduct of the slanderous press. In fact, that great engine of public instruction, and powerfully of freedom is prostituted to uses, of which the unreflecting part of the community are little aware, and all, perhaps, but a few, chiefly in the upper ranks of life, are completely ignorant. The universal publicity which is its grand achievement, the power which the periodical portion of it possesses of making whatever is once printed in a single newspaper, read in every village and hamlet throughout the whole empire, provided it be only of a nature to excite any interest of whatever description—can hardly exist, and not be liable to one very grievous abuse. If there lives any person of weak nerves, and who would rather pay a sum of money than have his infirmities exposed to this universal gaze, from

which no seclusion, no modesty, no humility of pretensions, can withdraw, for an instant, those whom the press marks for its prey; and if there be some other person aware of his weakness, and base enough to make it his gain; the villain is the unhappy man's master, and may have as much of his money as the necessity of providing for his own subsistence, can spare to the use of the unprincipled extortioner. The folly is extreme, but the dishonesty is not inconsiderable, of those who endeavour to palliate what no man dares defend, by describing the office thus performed by the press as a kind of police, and its tendency as preventive of misconduct in private life. It greatly augments the number of private immoralities, and it prevents none. The things which men are most unwilling to have made food for the diseased appetite of the public, are far more frequently mere weaknesses, or personal peculiarities, than crimes; vice is far more bold and reckless, and difficult to cow by threats, than folly or infirmity. Nor is the disposition to yield and to pay always occasioned by a person's own weaknesses; those of his near connexions, their faults, but almost as much their mental and bodily afflictions, all furnish the hold over delicate minds, feelings of pure affection, and even of manly sensibility, and minister to the machinations of the wretches whose offences are rife, whose success is prodigious, and whose security is almost assured. They thus, by driving their trade of threats, amass large sums of money, and the very nature of their victims, and the article which they prostitute themselves to deal in, gives the law no terrors for them. The enforcement of the law implies publicity, and it is by threatening publicity that the offence is perpetrated. Their whole power is derived from one consideration; that whatever one newspaper will consent to publish, must find its way into all the rest, provided the matter is of any interest; and this it can easily be made, even if relating to an obscure individual, though the universal publication of this might be less certain; but if the name of any person in a public station is involved, or of considerable rank, the universal publicity is certain. The fault here, as in

most of the crimes and abuses of the press, lies in great part with the public, and chiefly the fashionable part, as it is termed, of the world; so that, by a kind of retributive justice, they who chiefly contribute to give the engine of torment its power, are also those who most suffer by its working. There can be little doubt that if any one paper were to insert a story, garnished with high names, however manifest might be the impropriety of the publication, the other papers would run great risk by not also giving it to their readers; so it is inserted with, perhaps, a comment, disapproving the original publication, but professing an unwillingness to withhold it, as it has already been made public; and possibly an offer is added to insert any contradiction that the parties may choose to give—a topic which demands some farther remark.

The unwillingness of all men to prosecute for libels, always naturally great, has been much augmented of late years, by the difficulty of obtaining verdicts from juries, who are themselves apprehensive of the attacks which will be made upon them individually, for months after the trial. For a court of law is, of all engines of publicity, the most powerful, having at its command the whole resources of the press, with a good many peculiar to itself; and it gives not merely universal circulation to the subject-matter of its proceedings, but a degree of authority, fatal to their objects. Whoever, then, would do his duty to the community by prosecuting a libel, must lay his account with enregistering his frailties in an imperishable record and making a belief in them the faith of the whole world. It is true, the libeller is also severely handled, and the fears of the press and its victims, are undoubtedly mutual; legal proceedings being an object of especial and very natural dread to all editors and proprietors of works or papers. But the punishment can only be inflicted by the absolute sacrifice of the individual who proceeds, and he must lay his account with aggravating his own annoyance tenfold, for the sake of preventing others from being similarly troubled hereafter. It thus happens that but very rarely are any proceedings instituted against

the offenders, who every day pollute the press with their defamation. But farther, the powers of the press, mutually hostile on all other matters, are in firm and compact alliance in what regards their common interest—they do their utmost at all times, to discourage prosecutions and actions for libel. Their rule is a convenient one, certainly, and however gross the absurdity of the reason given for it, they find it almost universally received. If any one proceeds at law, for an attack upon his character, they assume that he must feel himself justly accused, else why not trust to his reputation; but if he be of liberal politics, he is, moreover, charged with deserting his principles, by invading the press and stifling discussion. But if he is attacked and does nothing, then they never fail to pronounce that he dares not, because conscious of guilt. When, however, any indication appears of a desire to take the law, then “our columns” are freely offered to explain or defend; he is at liberty “to send his own statement,” which will be inserted “with the strict regard to justice, that has always distinguished us.” So that every newspaper is erected into a tribunal, before which any person may be cited; if he makes default, judgment goes against him; if he appears, he enjoys the advantage of contesting in his own person, with an unknown adversary, while the scales are held by those who, having begun by taking part against him, are too ready to help the lurking defamer, because success is in part their own, or at all events conduces to their safety. As for any newspaper ever admitting that it has fallen into an error, or is in the wrong, or even that it has been hasty, or is capable, like other mortals, of erring in any respect, that is wholly out of the question; so that when by the most gross and palpable blunder, some wholly groundless statement has once been made, however it may be exposed elsewhere, and shown to have been some mere error of a name, or a date, or plain and downright misapprehension of a word or a fact, the mistake becomes the rule and canon of the paper for ever; and all that serves to prop it up is carefully given, and even dwelt upon, with a suppression of all that tends to expose and correct it. Nay, it

is well for the luckless wight who has been the only sufferer, and of course the innocent cause of the error, if he do not incur the perpetual hostility of the paper, and be misconstrued, and misrepresented, and attacked on all other occasions, merely because it was in defaming him that the paper got itself into a scrape. And to all this the preposterous state of the law, which throws every impediment in the way of just prosecutions—prevents an injured party from seeking redress, in the only way in which he can defy his accuser to prove his charge—presses unjustly upon the publisher in one thing—in another, as unjustly on the party defamed—encourages chicanery—protects anonymous slanderers,—affords no inducement to authors coming forward openly and avowedly in their own names*—and leaves it at all times impossible for editors to ascertain either the nature or the amount of the risk they run, and the means by which they make themselves secure. Under this defective system, the press has been at times oppressed. and at times, from the excess of the legal abuses, has revelled in licentiousness with absolute impunity; reputation has been at all times ill protected, and a habit has grown up among judges and juries, of administering a bad law so badly, as to make it much worse than the legislature gave it them; so that, to instance but one of many defects, a slandered man, having but a single proceeding open to him, by which he can vindicate his character, and defy a proof of the imputation—sues for damages—runs the risk of a conspiracy between writer and publisher proving falsehoods by false swearing

* Not only is no kind of obstacle thrown in the way of the skulking assassin of character, by making it, for instance, the rule, that upon proof of a defendant being the real author, he should, in a criminal proceeding, be suffered to give evidence of the truth of his libel, after due notice to the prosecutor; but the law allows a kind of proceeding, which prevents many an honest man from proceeding against his defamer. The author conceals himself, and indemnifies the publisher. The latter is sued, and pleads in justification, that is, avers the matters of the libel to be true. He then produces as his witness the real defamer, who pretends to know the things he has sworn, and being a competent witness, if he denies the indemnity, his evidence, in all probability uncontradicted, secures the escape of all parties.

against him—succeeds in obtaining a verdict, and receives from the “intelligent jury,” under the direction of the impartial judge, that the damages should be “adequate but moderate,” a verdict assessing the value of his character at some thirty pounds in London and Middlesex, and fifteen in the country.

After the case of the queen was over, and while her enemies turned the current of their spite, exasperated by vengeance after their discomfiture, into the foul channels of periodical defamation, it was understood that her majesty's advisers were prevented from proceeding against her defamers, by the difficulties which the state of the law interposed. She suffered with the rest of the community from the abuses of the press; but from one of its consequences, she was altogether exempt. Upon her firm soul, the menaces of the professional defamer fell powerless; the daily and hourly attempts of those abandoned ruffians, who, knowing that the press armed them with the boundless power of publication, threaten weak minds with that universal exposure, were, in the queen's case, wholly fruitless; not one farthing of her money was ever expended in averting a menace or silencing a defamer, any more than in bribing a witness, or gaining an adversary; and the only sum she is ever known to have given in any connexion whatever with the press, is said to have relieved a celebrated writer from a verdict obtained against him in a court of justice, upon a matter which had no connexion whatever either with the queen or her supporters.

The abuse of the press, to which we have been referring, has a pervading influence that can hardly be conceived, and the editors and other responsible conductors of it are really fully as much the victims of it as the instruments. They are wholly incapable of making themselves partakers in it, with a few vile exceptions; so are they, with the same exceptions, wholly free from all charge of accepting bribes, to resist or suppress matters affecting individuals. But unless they exercise a sharpness of eye, and control with a firm hand, and which is next to impossible, are never thrown off their guard,

they cannot prevent the powerful engine which is under their direction from being pointed by the malice or the covetousness of individuals, often unknown to them, so as to farther the plots in which this base traffic of threats consists. 'The extent to which the vile trade is driven can hardly be conceived.' All public men, especially all men in office, nay, most persons of both sexes who move in the eye of the world, experience its effects, or at least perceive symptoms of it almost daily. We have heard men high in the public service declare that they hardly ever knew a complaint or a remonstrance from a disappointed suitor for promotion which did not throw out intelligible threats, by hints, by references to other appeals, by allusion to an impartial public, or often by the use of a single word far more vague than any of these expressions, but the meaning of which could be doubted. Nay, we have heard in the same quarters, that very many applications for favours, most respectfully couched, contain some suggestions, as if it would be not less for the interest of the minister than of his suitor, that the prayer should be listened to. In other instances where the firmness and integrity of the great man himself are such as to make any threats unavailing, or even perilous, he is approached by friends and by connexions who are gained over to favour the petitioner by threats applied to them. But the most extensive branch of the threatening trade looks to mere pecuniary profit. Sometimes a sum is extorted; sometimes an annuity—not seldom, the payment of a tradesman's exorbitant demand, to avoid "exposure in a court of justice." Of all this detestable commerce, the press, but especially the newspaper press, is the mainspring, without which not one of its operations could be preferred to any extent whatever. The late Lord Dudley had a custom of saying that it had reduced assassination to a mere question of prudence—meaning, that when men are kept in a state of torment and irritation by this system of extortion, all other feelings merge in the resolution of self-defence. But there are other risks which the press encounters, and from which nothing can save it but a most rigorous exercise of far greater vigilance than is

now displayed ; an abstinence from dragging forward private persons into public view ; above all, a rigid determination that, whoever connected with any newspaper establishment shall be once caught taken advantage of his access to its columns, in order to gratify any private spite, much more any sordid propensity, shall that instant cease for ever to have any connexion with, or employment in it. The rule should be, that any editor or proprietor who finds out any of his writers to have had a private grudge against any one whom he has been attacking, must immediately be dismissed, and with notice of the ground of dismissal to all the other papers. In truth, the offence is that of gross dishonesty and breach of trust.*

To the abuses by newspapers and pamphleteers are now to be added those committed by booksellers and publishers on a larger scale. Select society and its manners, conversations of deceased persons into whose mouths any slander against the living may be safely put, collections of letters, with anecdotes of their writers, and those to whom they are addressed, have become a most favourite branch of reading with the thoughtless public ; and accordingly there is no expense to which avaricious and unprincipled publishers will not go in providing food for this diseased appetite. Here, again, the great market for the vile commodity is found among the upper classes, who, by a just retribution, are themselves the victims of the slanderous authors. Men of rank, and ladies of fashion, never reflect while they pay for a book exposing their rivals or their friends, that their own turn may come next, and their own private life be made sport for the town before the London season is over. As nothing published is now attended with the smallest risk of prosecution or action, a publisher has only to reckon the profits by the number of copies he can sell ; and the cost by the sum the manuscript is purchased for ; and as the copies sold will be

* An offence of a very similar kind is sometimes chargeable upon reviews, that of taking articles against works from rivals in the same walk of letters,—as from rival translators, or writers that are known to have a hostile feeling towards others.

many in proportion to the venom which pervades the book, the number of private persons who are exposed in it, the delicacy of the subjects of exposure; so will the price paid be low in proportion as the station of the author is mean, and his or her fortunes desperate. A double security is thus afforded that the publications will be of the very worst description in every respect; that abominable slanders will pervade the whole; that disclosures offensive to every feeling of delicacy, outraging even common propriety, will stud each page; and that the want of all talent, learning, style, correctness, literary merit of every kind, will be only atoned for by the malignity or the indecency of the details. To discourage such an infamous traffic is the interest—the direct personal interest—of every man and every woman in the country. Every man who keeps a body-servant—every woman who has a waiting-maid—nay, every one who is upon terms of intimacy with any person having a waiting-maid, or corresponding with such a person—is directly interested in the failure and the punishment of such panders to the depraved taste of the public, as those publishers. In the case of the work before us, Mr. Colburn has induced a lady of rank to be his caterer and accomplice, at the cost, as he himself states, of £1000; he will next find it better worth his while, perhaps, to give this lady's Abigail fifty guineas for her letter-box, or for a MS. which will probably show more literary ability than that of her malicious mistress.

It may, however, be asked in what way any danger is to approach the press—that “great power in the state,” as it has often been termed, and most accurately—“the new power in Europe,” as Mr. Wyndham called it—“the fourth estate in the monarchy,” as others phrase it? Its great influence is not denied; but we deny altogether that it is invulnerable or invincible. Let the abuse of which we have spoken but proceed a little farther; let it go on unchecked and unabated as it now exists; and it is our firm belief, that instead of crouching and complaining of these facts, men will begin to defend themselves against the unseen tyrant

with many heads—the only despot who, himself living and thriving by assassination, is exempt from a fate and a fear to which all single and ordinary despots are subject, as the only check to their enormities, and the only control of their caprice. Oppression pushed beyond a certain pitch never fails to rouse its victims, and beget the spirit of resistance. That hour may well be thought to approach, when it has so often been said in free England that the country is happy where the press is fettered; that the price we pay for the liberty of the press in its gross abuses is all too dear; and that if we can only preserve our public liberty by an individual thralldom which makes life uncomfortable, the balance is a loss by the bargain. Nor can any inference be drawn against the practicability of resistance from the abortive attempts already made. They were deservedly abortive because they were directed against the perfections of the press, and not against its crimes; nay, the attacks upon it were made by the very men who were, for their own most nefarious purposes, fostering its worst offences against society, and profiting by them. Instead of assailing the libeller or the violator of domestic peace—the venal or the malignant wretch who encroaches upon the privacy of secluded life, to gratify his own spite, or feed for lucre the foul appetite of others,—the daring writer was attacked who denounced abuse and corruption, who invaded tyranny in its strongholds, who ventured to think for himself upon the great questions of church and state, and taught the people to follow his bright example. Mean while private slander was propagated by the very parties who would secure immunity for public delinquency by silencing the press; and while no discussion of the measures of state and the conduct of statesmen was tolerated, hired assassins were set on to run down by scurrilous falsehoods the character of all who dared oppose the career of oppression or malversation. The *Constitutional Association*, as it called itself—the *Bridge Street Gang*, as the people soon learned to nick-name it—had no better object than to silence free discussion of public affairs; and it was in close alliance with the party which, under the royal

patronage, on the same occasion, the acquittal of the queen, seduced and polluted the press to defame all who espoused the cause of justice against tyranny. Yet had that association been established for a praiseworthy purpose, and with consistent views—had the same numbers and funds been collected together for the punishment of whatever paper drove a trade in slander—had its members strenuously exerted themselves to enforce the whole law—that is, the criminal law, against all private libels, whether in the books of the Mr. Colburns, or the pamphlets of Mrs. Clarke, or the newspapers of each week and each day—who can entertain a doubt that the press would have speedily been defeated, been purified, been exalted, by restoring it to the proper and dignified office of teaching the people and overawing their rulers? The community would have gained much, but, in truth, the press would have gained much more, by such a defensive league of all respectable and firm-minded men against its intolerable abuses. Nor can the time now be far distant when some man of irreproachable life, in public and in private, of sufficient authority with his countrymen to ensure co-operation, and of capacity fit for so important a service, will arise amongst us, and worthily execute the important mission of leading the revolt against unknown oppressors; and, if not destroying the invisible tribunal which now domineers over the community, at least restraining within due bounds its lofty pretensions, and compelling it to wholly abstain from the excesses that have rendered it hateful to God and man.

But if it shall be said that we must take the bad with the good—that not great institution, no powerful instrument is exempt from the liability to be abused which attends all the works of man and all his exertions—and that the evils of which we are so loudly complaining, cannot be extirpated or prevented without endangering, perhaps destroying the freedom of the press itself—we make answer, that no persons have ever been more constantly the strenuous and uncompromising friends of that freedom than ourselves; and that we give the best earnest of our sincerity when we add the expres-

sion of our wish even to accept of this great security for public liberty with all its encroachments on individual comfort, to which our remarks have been directed—IF WE CAN HAVE IT ON NO OTHER TERMS. But then we must first be satisfied that this is a necessary condition, and that there is no possibility of severing the clog from the benefit. No reasoning can convince us of any such thing. Past experience is all the other way; for the press never was more free in the right and wholesome sense, than when private feelings were spared, nor ever more harassed with state protections than during some periods of licentious invasion of private society. A trial of measures devised for its purification—its restoration to former purity—can alone show that the country must be put to the sad election of losing the best security for its liberty, or suffering the present intolerable evils of unbridled licentious publication. The wretched libellers and threateners, and the disreputable booksellers of whom we have been compelled to speak, are the only portion of society who can pretend the least interest in the most prodigious abuse of our times. Where is the man courageous enough to pretend that the constitution of England is in jeopardy if Mr. Colburn shall no longer be suffered to tempt persons of feeble understanding, and destitute of all honourable feeling, into a partnership with himself, by giving them a share of the profits derived from publications outraging all the feelings of our nature, and on subjects with which the public at large have absolutely no concern?

One topic remains, a plausible one, but a fallacy still. The feelings thus outraged are said to be those only of the higher and more fastidious circles, and, above all, of public men, who, it is said, must lay their account with suffering for the public good; must steel their minds against being too sensitive to attacks upon their private life; and must persuade their connexions, how retired soever their habits, to be as callous as themselves. But we ask, if it is rarely just to public men, that because their lives are given up to the service of their country, therefore, they should be the only portion of its inhabi-

tants whose feelings may be outraged with impunity? Is there any thing like justice in proscribing the class of society most devoted to their duties, and proclaiming that upon them alone may be inflicted, what, to all others, would be the extreme of torture? But, we farther ask, if there is any wisdom in this cruel proscription? How often is it said that the character of public men is public property? Then has the public a less interest in their character being really pure, honest, high-spirited, gentle, and kind, than in their enjoying the reputation merely of those excellent virtues? But can the ingenuity of a fiend devise so effectual a method of making them the very reverse of all this, as making their souls callous in the most tender points of all? The state of the press is every day bringing matters nearer and nearer to the point when no man can submit to serve the country who has either nice feelings of honour and reputation, or a refined sensibility of heart—and we feel perfectly convinced, that the loss is prodigious which its service must sustain by so miserable a selection as must soon be made of those qualified to engage in it.

This is the rational view of the matter, and places in its true light the impolicy of sanctioning the abuse complained of by destroying all regard for reputation in the most important members of society. But after all, we are disposed to place our refutation of the fallacy upon higher ground, reverting to our first topic—namely, the crying injustice of it to those whose feelings are so outraged. The infliction of pain is never justifiable unless for some great public purpose. This principle is the foundation of our only right even to punish offenders. How much more strongly does it apply to the case of unoffending parties? See how we even treat the lower animals! All men cry out against experiments, the cruelty of which is out of all proportion to the amount or the utility of the knowledge thus obtained; and no philosophical inquirer is allowed to push his experiments so far as to torture rabbits and dogs, unless there is a reasonable prospect of an investigation thus conducted, leading to some discovery highly beneficial to mankind. What possible right then can the Colburns

and their like have to torture the feelings of living persons by publications which can only slake their own thirst of profit, or food to the prurient and diseased appetites of the idle or the malignant? Their crimes would be unpardonable were even some gratification of scientific curiosity the purpose of the offender, unless that curiosity referred to matters of great moment, which might justify the pain whereby it was purchased. When the only possible fruit of offence is money to the criminal, and corruption to the public—there is nothing but aggravation in every view that can be taken of their delinquency.

We have, in the course of these remarks, discussed a subject of such paramount importance, that we hardly think any other ever broached by us since the commencement of our labours, five-and-thirty years ago, possess the same deep and universal and permanent interest. We trust that the discussion may have its due effect with the reader of at least fixing his attention upon the question in all its various relations. Aware, as we must be, that the other matters handled in this long paper will be apt at first sight to appear more interesting and more attractive, because treating more upon personal topics, we, nevertheless, are profoundly impressed with the vastly superior claims to attention of this latter part of the article; and we make it our most earnest request that this portion may be suffered to become the subject of deliberation and calm reflection among all who value the best interests of society. To those who regard the great uses of the press itself, and its high destinies, if kept pure, we chiefly make our appeal. The grievous abuses we have been exposing are fatal to that great engine of public instruction; and while they present the most cheering prospect to the bigoted enemy of reformation and the interested adversary of liberty—to the friend of darkness and the ally of tyrants—they offer nothing but despair to the advocate of human improvement and the assertor of the rights of man. The most superficial of observers alone can for a moment imagine that we have been setting ourselves in opposition to the press. As well might he be called an enemy of the city who would cleanse its

sewers of the "perilous stuff" that threatens to lay its population waste with pestilence,—as well might the physician, endowed with courage to stand between the living and the dead, and stay that plague, be deemed the enemy of man, because he applied the remedy needful for the malady wherewith his patient had been stricken.

And now we assuredly feel the swift descent which we make from subjects of such surpassing interest and importance, as the great characters of the past age, and the gross abuses of the press, to the work before us, remarkable only for displaying in equal and in ample measure, the utmost ignorance of the one, and the most striking example of the other. But the duty which will be expected of us must be performed; and we have no right to let the dulness and feebleness with which a bad purpose is executed act as a screen to shelter the vile intention from justice. The origin, the nature, and the execution of this book, therefore, claim a few remarks.

A woman of the highest rank, by birth at least; is openly stated to be its author. Her name has been repeatedly given in the newspapers, without any contradiction either from her accomplice, the publisher, or from herself, or from any one else under the sanction of a real name. A highly respectable journal of a political and literary nature,* in an article devoted to the subject, gave vent to the feelings of just indignation at the offence committed, and charged it on Lady Charlotte Campbell, (now Bury,) by name. Still, no denial has proceeded either from herself, her publisher, or her friends. That Mr. Colburn gave a thousand pounds for the manuscript, and that it is the work of a woman, is all we know to have been told of the plot by him; and that has appeared under his own hand, and the hand of a correspondent, a military gentleman, who, justly offended at certain untrue matters published in it, in regard to an amiable and respected relative.

* *Quarterly Review*. The observations on Queen Caroline, in the article alluded to, are dictated by great prejudice and some political rancour.

thought proper to address a letter of inquiry to the publisher. One thing is quite certain in all this; Lady C. Campbell (otherwise Bury) might in one hour remove all doubt on the subject; so might Mr. Colburn; and as both knew of the universally received belief, and neither has taken any steps whatever to dispel it, we are entitled to conclude, either that she is the author, or that he has made it worth her while to pass for such, and in either case she must bear the blame. That he would resent as an injury to him in his trade any doubts seriously expressed on this head, no one can pretend to deny; for the whole value (such as it is) of the details contained in the book, depends upon their being vouched by the authority of some one who had been in the queen's household. And here begins the ground of all the charges to which this woman is exposed by the scandalous business. For Lady C. Campbell was in the household of the queen when Princess of Wales, and she was received into it as an act of kindness well suited to that illustrious lady's charitable disposition. Knowing that Lady Charlotte had been left in poor circumstances, with the burden of a large family, by her husband's death, she conceived that humanity required her to accede to the application, on the suggestion made, and gave a woman of narrow means, of altogether unexceptionable conduct, and of manners and figure extremely pleasing, the convenient addition to her income of a few hundreds a-year. It is said,—such a passage being naturally now called to mind by her late unexpected conduct,—that a friend of the princess being asked by her, while deliberating upon the appointment, if the proposed lady was a safe and trust-worthy person or one likely to gossip and make mischief in a house well known to be infested with spies and other vermin, replied with something like indignation at the doubt, "Madam, she is a gentlewoman, ay, and sister to the most honourable and amiable gentleman of the age!" The feelings of her royal highness's friend may be conceived, if she should have survived to read the records of this high-born gentlewoman's treachery. Little could it then have entered into his mind, that she was

occupied, while in waiting, with committing to paper all she saw, and heard, and misunderstood, or comprehended not at all, in order that she might afterwards turn her portfolio to account, and sell the confidence of her kind mistress for the means of decking her own person in the costly tawdriness of younger days!

If there be any thing in this book more stupid than another, where all is marked with want of sense as much as of sound principle and right feeling, it is the absurd trick of pretending that it is the work of a man. How is this silly falsehood kept up? We need give no farther proofs than the princess's familiar letters and notes, published with the most unblushing effrontery, in which she addresses the author in all the familiarity of persons writing to those of their own sex. However, we at once put down the base fabrication by a letter from Mr. C. K. S. at Christ Church, Oxford, stated to be addressed to the author as a man, and in which occurs the following passage, which we presume is not in the style of the inmates of Christ Church, when addressing their *male* correspondents.

“I have finished your portrait and it is not like, so I have met the fate of all my painting predecessors. Yet to catch your lordship's likeness would not be quite impossible, if this system of galvanism could be improved, and four painters of ancient times rendered as lively by it, as a pig's tail is at present. I would rouse from his dull repose, Titian, to paint your head; Sir Peter Lely, your neck; Vandyke, your hands; and Rubens for the draperies and back ground of the picture;—then, perchance, one might have something worth looking at;—as matters stand, I confess I am in utter despair.”

The first thing that strikes any one who reads these volumes, is the detestable conduct of any person living in a select society, and keeping minutes of every unguarded expression, notes of each thoughtless and careless action, and copies of any hasty or unreflecting letter, for the purpose of afterwards coining the whole into money, by exposing all to the public gaze. But

after this first impression is effaced, and the indignation has subsided which it had occasioned, the next surprise is that any person of the rank of a gentlewoman should deem it worth her while, for a paltry sum of money, to sacrifice her station in society; and make it nearly as impossible for any persons of respectable condition, nay, for any who prudently set a value on their own personal safety, to admit her under their roofs, as if she had been convicted of an infamous crime. It is said, indeed, that she threatens society with a fresh outrage, not in the shape of dull and unreadable novels, but of letters received from all her friends. Then we will say that it is their own fault if she or her publishing accomplices shall execute this menace. Every person who has ever written her a letter ought to have an injunction bill ready to put on the file of the court of chancery the instant any such work appears. The property of letters is partly in the writer of them, and the receiver has no right whatever to publish them without the writer's leave. As for property in a book like the present. there is, there can be, no copyright at all in it; and we speak the deliberate opinion of the heads of the law, when we say that any one may pirate it with perfect impunity—the court giving no kind of protection to so slanderous a publication. Mr. Colburn has, therefore spent his money to no purpose, and will find it a poor speculation to repeat a like adventure.

But really the stupidity and gross ignorance which prevail through every page of it, are sufficient to deprive this work of any sale, and the purchaser of a copy-right of any profit. It is wonderful how any person of the authoress's rank in society, should evince so little knowledge of the world in which she ought to have lived. Every page demonstrates that she had never associated with the good company of her day. She is as wholly ignorant of the tone, and as much at a loss respecting the meaning, of refined conversation, as if she had come from the provinces, and never been in the society of the capital. It is plain, indeed, that she is out of her element. Astonished at matters which are familiar, and of hourly occurrence,—receiving without the

least remark things which should stagger persons inured to refined converse,—utterly unable to comprehend men and things which are known as the *a, b, c* of all who live in the higher circles of London,—every page shows that a person has obtained admission to society wholly new to her, and is among those whose intercourse is foreign to her habits of life. Endless mistakes—ridiculous confusions of persons and of things—constant inability to comprehend what is the matter—are the inevitable result. But the construction of the difficult passages is always the same,—the blank is always filled up in one way—the unknown meaning is without any exception always given in a single unvaried direction—the uncharitable, the malignant, the spiteful, the cruel, above all, the slanders are seasoned the highest, and concentrated the most strongly, when levelled the most bitterly against the royal mistress, patroness, benefactress of the author—against her whose charitable hand had been timely extended to relieve her wants by receiving her in the household, and whose bounty in an extra largess of money, the pages of this very *work* itself record, after the period of her service had expired.

Nor is the princess herself the only subject of misapprehension, and of uniform, or all but uniform, slander. Hardly a person is mentioned who does not afford opportunities for displaying alternately the dulness and the malevolence of the writer. No matter how little these may be obtruded upon the public eye by their position in society or their conduct in private life: no matter how little connected they may be with the court of the late queen; it suffices that their names should be named—that the recollection of them should come across this gentlewoman—her pen is at once dipped in gall, and the scandal flows. The publisher, no doubt, gave a hint that an abundance of names would be required to make the book sell, and as he had given a large price, he had a right to be heard. The stupid affectation of initials and dashes is another trick to give mystery and pique curiosity, where, in case any one should mistake or be at the smallest loss to find out who are meant, sometimes a circumstance is added that at once fills up the

blank, and sometimes a note tells that Lady M—— C—— means Lady Mary Coke. If a faint illusion be made in a private letter, written only for the eye it was addressed to, but here published to increase the selling value of the work, a commentary explains what the author's vanity is resolved should be no secret. Thus, "I suppose her royal highness alludes to Lady Charlotte Campbell, the beauty of the Argyll family of that day." Indeed the small traffic of malignity that is driven between the author in the text, and a supposed editor in the notes, presents the very picture of petty trickery as well as detraction. If the text abuses, the note, with a stupid stare, expresses wonder at any person having such bad taste as to dislike such a one; if the text, by some rare chance, happens to praise, the note spits out the author's venomous phlegm, which perhaps it was thought better, for some purpose or other, that she should be able to deny,—as when a very near connexion of one who married her daughter is to be slandered, and the peace of a whole family irrecoverably destroyed. the libeller skulks into the note, for the purpose of being able to exclaim, "Thou canst not say 'twas I that did it."

If a sample be required of the breach of all trust and confidence with which this book throughout abounds. and which indeed is the very subject of it, and for which the publisher paid his thousand pounds, take the letter, Vol. I. p. 23,—or rather the extract of a letter—for it is curiously culled out from the original document, and is the only passage given.

The princess expresses herself indiscreetly, certainly, but surely not unnaturally, as if the death of her unsparing tormentor would be the period of her troubles. Had she been guilty of the vile hypocrisy of pretending any the least sorrow for such an event, or the blasphemy of praying that it might not happen, we should equally have had the letter published and all the world would have turned from it with disgust. This letter, as the publisher no doubt foresaw, has excited much indignation, and the great indecency of it has been exclaimed against. But let two very different offences be kept dis-

tinged in our reprobation of them, as they differ most widely in their nature. There is the offence of feeling relieved at a cruel and heartless persecutor's decease,—her husband, indeed,—but only the more inexcusable on account of the relation, the whole duties of which he habitually violated. No one can visit severely what every one must admit to have been a feeling all but unavoidable. There is also the indiscretion of expressing such natural feelings in writing, which, had the writing never met any eye but hers to whom alone the writer addressed it, never could have called down a severe censure from any one who heard of it. We live certainly in an age, if not of canting, at least of a lax and defective morality, whose many blanks we seek to fill up with a very cheap kind of virtue—that of indignation at other people's failings and overdone views of their obligations; pretty much as dishonest goldsmiths put in bits of tinsel to minish the precious metals, and knavish coiners colour over copper and lead to make them pass for the current coin. The heroics into which some of our contemporaries have been thrown upon female delicacy and affection to husbands, by reading this publication, remind us very much of those mean practices; for we have looked in vain through the page that glows with such virtuous indignation at the mere indiscretion of one party, in order to find one solitary expression betokening even the most tempered disapprobation of the cruelty, the perfidy, and the crimes by which the revengeful life of the other party was filled up and disfigured. Wonderful, if not wilful, is the blindness of some men! How could it ever be imagined that their clipped morality should attract much respect—that this gross inconsistency should be overlooked even by the most careless reader? The husband is suffered to pass his life in tormenting his wife,—to turn her out of doors,—to live in open adultery from the hour of his marriage,—and afterwards to seek her life whom he had driven into strange society—while she is to be execrated as if she had done all this and worse, for merely giving vent to a feeling which every human being, every one lower than the angels, must have enter-

tained, and which if she had not entertained, all men would have believed that they witnessed a miracle!

In answer to a mass of scandalous gossip distributed over page after page, the greater part of which is unquestionably the creation of a malicious fancy uniting with a dull understanding, and the rest a misconception of facts of mere royal idleness and caprice, it is quite sufficient to say, that if the writer really believes all or half of the slanders that distil from her pen—if she really was living in scenes so revolting to a woman of virtue, or even of ordinary refinement, as she would have us believe—why did she remain a day, or an hour, amidst such pollution? There was no tie of any kind to hold her; no duty whatever to discharge; no obligation to bind. Had she chosen to go forth from the den of impurity, the door was open. She had been received into the household from motives of humanity; in order to bestow this kindness so acceptable to her circumstances, her fantastic habits had been overlooked, her dull society borne with. What kept her there then one hour after her virtue forbade a longer sojourn? She is in a dilemma from whence it would require far other ingenuity than hers to extricate herself. Either she is now saying the thing that is not; or she stamps herself with discredit by the confession of having submitted to degrading intercourse for the love of gain. She is like a witness who comes forward to inculpate herself, and whom no court believes. The tale she tells works her own discredit in the exact proportion of its injury to her deceased mistress. We believe this writer not to be the person she now would fain represent herself; indifferently as we think of her, she is not, by a great deal so bad as she would paint herself. She did not prostitute herself by living in scenes of impurity; but she had heard things which made her suspicious; she was deceived by jokes she understood not nor ever gave herself the trouble of examining;—witness her swallowing all the nonsense told by the princess about her deceased sister, Princess *Caroline*, the very name alone being enough to show the whole was a fiction, invented to play upon a fool; she was imposed upon by interested agents who would fain

make her their tool; she misconceived some things from not having lived in courtly company; others she misunderstood from natural incapacity; and having once persuaded herself that all was not right, whatever she saw gave birth to wrong impressions. But as she saw nothing in the least decisive, her belief at the time, and on the spot, was not formed and fixed. She kept her place, therefore, as her predecessor Lady Douglas had done five years before; and afterwards, from supposing she had seen much vice, her fancy suggested much that she never saw; she resolved to make a book for money, as her predecessor had resolved for some such reason to make a trial; and had the parties been still alive, we are not at all sure that the parallel would not have been rendered complete, by a new "Delicate Investigation," in which she might form the prominent actor.

There is nothing much more disgusting in this book than the cant of religion which pervades it. By that hard name we have assured a full right to call it, when we see it usually unaccompanied with charity. Take one instance. Lord Abercorn had been visited with the most severe afflictions in the loss of his amiable family, almost all of whom he had survived. He maintained a firm and erect posture under this storm of fate. To what use must the malicious writer of these volumes turn the mention of his misfortunes, but to record that he was an unbeliever? In all likelihood this is a fabrication or a mistake, arising from the marquis pushing aside some officious attempts of hers at increasing his sufferings by reading him a dull lecture. But she puts it broadly down as a fact. "I wish I could give him comfort, by advising him where to seek for it, where alone it is to be found; but his heart is hardened, and he will not believe." The name is here given at full length; and in the very same paragraph mention is made of something quite immaterial having occurred at a lady's house—but her name is carefully wrapped up as Lady S——!

In the midst of all the abuse of the unfortunate princess, which forms the staple of these volumes, though not to the exclusion of attacks upon nearly every other

person who happens to be named, we find one or two passages where the truth is so powerful that it lays slander low, and pierces through malevolence itself. We defy any human being to have displayed more refined delicacy of feeling, or been guided by a stricter regard to propriety and good taste, or to have shown in most difficult circumstances more entire presence of mind, than the princess exhibits in the following passages; the only extract we shall give from the author's own part of the work.

“ When we arrived at the opera, to the princess's, and all her attendants' infinite surprise, we saw the Regent placed between the Emperor and the King of Prussia, and all the minor princes, in a box to the right.—‘ God save the king’ was performing when the princess entered, and consequently she did not sit down. I was behind; so of course I could not see the house very distinctly, but I saw the regent was at that time standing and applauding the Grassinis. As soon as the air was over, the whole pit turned round to the princess's box and applauded *her*. We, who were in attendance on her royal highness, entreated her to rise and make a courtesy, but she sat *immoveable*, and at last, turning round, she said to Lady — “ My dear, Punch's wife is nobody when Punch is present.’ We all laughed, but still thought her wrong not to acknowledge the compliment paid her; but she was right, as the sequel will prove. ‘ We shall be hissed,’ said Sir W. Gell. ‘ No, no,’ again replied the princess, with infinite good-humour, ‘ I know my business better than to take the morsel out of my husband's mouth; I am not to seem to know that the applause is meant for me till they call my name.’ The prince seemed to verify her words, for he got up and bowed to the audience. This was construed into a bow to the princess, most unfortunately; I say most unfortunately, because she has been blamed for not returning it; but I, who was an eye witness of the circumstance, know the princess acted just as she ought to have done. The fact was, the prince took the applause to himself; and his friends, or rather his *toadies* (for they

do not deserve the name of *friends*;) to save him from the imputation of this ridiculous vanity, chose to say, that he did the most beautiful and elegant thing in the world, and bowed to his wife!!

“When the opera was finished, the prince and his supporters were applauded, but not enthusiastically; and scarcely had his royal highness left the box, when the people called for the princess, and gave her a very warm applause. She then went forward and made three courtesies, and hastily withdrew. I believe she acted perfectly right throughout the evening—but every body tells a different story, and thinks differently. How trivial all this seems, how much beneath the dignity of rational beings! But trifles make up the sum of earthly things—and in this instance this trivial circumstance affects the Princess of Wales’s interests, therefore it becomes of consequence for the true statement to be made known; and as I was present, I can and will tell the truth. When the coachman attempted to drive home through Charles-street, the crowd of carriages was so immense it was impossible to pass down that street, and with difficulty the princess’s carriage backed, and we returned past Carlton House, where the mob surrounded her carriage, and, having once found out that it was her royal highness, they applauded and huzzaed her royal highness till she, and Lady —, and myself, who were with her, were completely stunned. The mob opened the carriage doors, and some of them insisted upon shaking hands with her, and asked if they should burn Carlton House. ‘No, my good people,’ she said, ‘be quite quiet—let me pass, and go home to your beds.’ They would not, however, leave off following her carriage for some way, and cried out ‘Long live the Princess of Wales, long live the innocent,’ &c. &c.—She was pleased at this demonstration of feeling in her favour, and I never saw her look so well, or behave with so much dignity. Yet I hear since, all this has been misconstrued, and various lies told.”

- The second of these volumes opens with one of the most notable of the countless instances which they pre-

sent of the writer's being as 'completely in the dark upon the whole intercourse and meaning and society of the wits whom she met at the Princess of Wales's table, as if she had been transplanted from the house-keeper's room. She records a dinner at Kensington Palace, where the company was composed of Mr. Luttrell, Mr. Nugent, Mr. Brougham, Mr. Ward, and Lord King. Of the latter she is pleased to say, for the purpose of at once destroying the whole credit of all the accounts she gives of other less known persons; "He is a very dull man. I never met him here or any where else before that I remember," (so that he *must* be an obscure man as well as a dull one,) "nor can I conceive why the princess thought of inviting him. She must have some reasons; such as making him useful; for he is neither ornamental nor agreeable." Now, it is so universally known that Lord King was one of the most distinguished men of his age, and not more for knowledge and great talents than for the powers of conversation which made his society singularly delightful, that the reader of this passage is lost in amazement—the more so, that he who is represented as not ornamental, was about the most handsome person of the day, as any painter could have informed this silly writer. But what follows is perfect. She represents herself as affected by the conversation taking turn, "of quizzing Mr. Wilberforce;" and so little did she know the tone of the society she was admitted to, that she was not aware of Mr. Wilberforce being the intimate friend and object of veneration of several of the company who indulged in this harmless pleasantry, as they were wont, from time to time, merely to plague Mr. Brougham, whose more intimate friendship with that great man used to call forth these sallies of mere good-humour from men, all of whom were as incapable of really laughing at, or underrating Mr. Wilberforce, as this dull author was of comprehending the tone of those she was permitted now and then to see.

If her ignorance of men and things in English society leads her into such mistakes, but never, be it observed, into good-natured or charitable ones, we may well ex-

pect that when the scene of her remarks is laid abroad, the page will be studded, at least as thick, with blunders. Among them, we hope, may be placed the story (vol. ii. p. 95) of a duchess being for some time the favourite of a certain prince, she being, what this writer probably knew not the aunt of that serene personage. But not content with incest, she must needs charge the lady with the profligacy of having admitted her coachman to her favours, in the same breath. In one single instance we retract or qualify our assertion, that all her misapprehensions are unfavourable to their objects. Speaking of Lord Glenbervie, whose great merits we do not at all deny, though they certainly were of another cast, she says, he was "famous, when at the bar, for being so very profound a lawyer that he was termed the very dungeon of law."

It may possibly prove a farther qualification to what we have more than once observed of the uniform malignity displayed towards the princess, if we add that the proceedings, in 1820, on the bill of pains and penalties, seem to have animated this author with a momentary enthusiasm in favour of her kind benefactress. But it is under the guidance of so very weak a head, that it can lend very little help to its object. Witness the indignation which she expresses (vol. ii. p. 397) against the queen's counsel for not "hurling their briefs at the wig of the Lord Chancellor," and at which, and at their going on with the evidence, to prove her majesty's innocence, instead of picking a quarrel with the House of Lords, by "dashing the powder out of the lion-visaged, manelike upper work of Eldon," she says, "her heart swelled in her bosom to the size of thrice their hearts!"

The reader of this article is already aware that the authoress of the book has thrown open her letter-box to the publisher, and he seems to have ransacked it with the mere purpose of garnishing its pages with distinguished names, and without the least regard to the propriety of printing any given production, or indeed to its contents possessing the smallest portion of interest. There are several letters given of the Princess of Wales, which contain absolutely nothing that any human being

can find the least entertainment in reading. Can any thing be more like a trick than advertising a book as containing original letters of Queen Caroline, when again and again all that you find to read is only such matter as the following, about equal in interest, and as well deserving to be printed as cards of invitation to dinner?

"I am on the eve of sailing, which will be to-morrow evening, as the wind is favourable, in the Jason frigate. Another brig is to carry all our luggage, baggage, and carriages. Captain King represents Jason himself. If the present wind is favourable to land at (illegible) continues, we shall arrive by the 12th of August; by the 15th I hope to be at Brunswicke. I intend only to remain in my native country ten or fifteen days, after which I shall set out immediately for Switzerland, in the beginning of September. My intention still is to remain at Naples for the winter, but in case disturbances should commence there against Murat, of course I should prefer to be the winter at Rome or Florence—but we must not anticipate misfortunes before they really arrive, for which reason, I trust for the best, to be able to be at Naples," &c. &c.

But the like objection cannot certainly be made to the publication of Sir W. Gell's letters, though any thing more reprehensible than giving to the world such effusions of good-humoured nonsense, can hardly be imagined. The mere keeping them, and exposing them to the risk of seeing the light, is bad enough; and tends to break up all social intercourse, by destroying its whole security; but the deliberate act of selling them for money, in order that the public may be admitted to see what the writer assuredly wrote and sent in the perfect certainty of its being instantly destroyed—at all events of no eyes but hers he was addressing ever seeing one line—is an offence of a flagrant character. We subjoin two of these letters, the oddity of which shows they came from a humorist; though he was also a man of rare talents and endowments. It may be presumed

that Mr. and Mrs. Thompson mean the regent and princess; and of course Thompson House is Carlton Palace.

“As to favour with both Mr. Thompson and Mrs. Thompson, that is out of the question. I was drubbed for executing my commissions in the aphrodisiac way, in such style; but you are not to suppose that crowned heads are capable of distinguishing such superabundant talents. On the contrary, my constituents see my merits, and the university confers the horrors—I mean honours; for they will not let princes do any thing of the kind in mere gaiety of heart, but all is done through the ministry. Kepple Craven returns in the first week of June; Mrs. P. is going to Worthing to see Lady C. Campbell, and so is Mr. Knutson, or Canuteson, to prevent the sea from flowing, as his ancestor, Canute the Great did.

“As to Mrs. D——, you know, when you are gone to France I shall have a fine opportunity of retorting all your malice and your sallies, and I can trust to the lady in question. I seemed banished from Thompson House, but she has a triumph at Boodles’s, ten to one. The balls at White’s and Co., seem in a languishing state, but London is furiously full of parties and suppers. Only to give you an idea of what I was engaged to go to last night:—Dinner, Mrs. Lock, 2000 virgins; Lady Douglass, music; Mrs. Davenport, christening; Devenshire House, supper; Lady Salisbury’s. I do not pretend to send you any thing entertaining, as we write on business. Being,

“My dear ——,

“Your affectionate grandmother,

“JOHN JULIUS ANGERSTEIN.”

“Mrs. Thompson had an idea of hiring Lady Oxford’s house, next door, and persuading Lady C. Campbell to come and occupy it. I wish her royal highness would try and make Ma Tante Aurore accept this invitation; it would do very well, if the said Oxfords quitted it. The Oxfords say that they can live perfectly well

for 3000 a-year, provided they have *only* what is necessary; but a carriage is included in the said necessities, and a tutor for the ugly boy, and a doctor for the naughty girls; besides all the furniture they spoil or destroy, which cannot be trifling; and four thousand dresses, with gold embroidery for the little Alfred; and last, but not least, many dogs who have neither left one corner of the carpet nor a single silk chair, without holes.

Inspired by these awful reflections, my paper seems to be finished. I see, every day and every hour, more reasons why people should never marry, and why I shall never be in love with a lady of fashion. I see sighs and tears lavished on one, and as quickly bursting and dropping from another. No; in spite of those smiles of Lady C. C. which might seduce one's weak heart for a moment, I shall never be really in love with her. Tell her so, and that she may give way to all those elegant effusions of sentimentality in her next letter, which so eminently distinguish her from the other inhabitants of the civilized world, add, that my judgment will not be perverted by the state of my heart, which is adamant; and I shall be able to give her excellent counsel, where prudence, patience, chastity, temperance, and the best of the virtues of northern climates, want of opportunity, and barren hills, are required. We except Lady Charlotte Lindsay daily. Love to Lord and Lady Glenbervie. Oh! fy, Mr. Douglas!

“Your most affectionate aunt,

“ANNE TAYLOR,
“*Alias*, WILLIAM GELL.”

Having extracted these specimens of his epistolary style, it is fit we add that Sir William Gell was one of the most accomplished scholars, most learned antiquaries, and most agreeable companions of his day. Few ever added more relish to the cup of society than was infused into the sweet potion by his varied acquirements, extensive knowledge of the world, familiarity with the best society, experience of various countries, full acquaintance with “the manners of many men and many

cities,"—added to his quaint and original humour, and his constant good spirits, in spite of the most painful infirmities. Nor these, high though they be, the only qualities which entitled him to a distinguished place in the mundane system of refined intercourse. His manly courage in facing the adversaries who would oppress his royal mistress, and crush all her adherents—his noble disregard of interest and all other sordid considerations—his constancy in maintaining a serene front amidst the frowns of fate as well as of power—his gaiety, even to buoyancy of spirits, whilst a martyr to the hereditary gout that prematurely shortened, after embittering, his life—present a character well fitted to win the admiration of the philosopher, as well as the esteem of all just men. His truly classical works have attracted the well-deserved esteem of the learned world; his loss, first to the society of his country, when his crippled state obliged him to seek relief in the delightful climate of Italy, then to the world, when he sank into the grave with a spirit unsubdued and nerves unshaken, have left a blank in the polished circles of Europe, not easily to be filled up.

While we perform the grateful task of strewing flowers over his classical grave, another lies near, as we are reminded by these volumes—a grave destined to receive still higher attainments, and to close over far more brilliant prospects. The late Lord Dudley, better known for the greater part of the present century as John William Ward, was certainly one of the most remarkable men that have appeared in this country; and when the adventitious gifts which fortune bestowed on him, in union with extraordinary endowments of mind, are regarded, we may well affirm that a more cruel fate has hardly ever blighted such singular expectations as the world had a good right to indulge in him. Born to an immense and uncumbered fortune, with none of the trammels which a numerous body of relations too often impose, as more than a counterpoise for any power and influence that such a connexion is calculated to confer, this eminent person entered public life with the most perfect independence, that ever rising

statesman enjoyed. But nature has been still more lavish of his gifts than fortune. He possessed one of the most acute and vigorous understandings that any man ever was armed with. His quickness was not accompanied with the least temerity; on the contrary, he was as sure as the slowest of mankind. His wit was of the brightest order, combining with the liveliest perception of remote resemblances, and mere distinctions—the peculiar attribute of wit properly so called—all that nice relish of the ludicrous, especially in character, out of which perfect humour is engendered. His powers of reasoning, though never cultivated in the walks of the strictest sciences, were admirable; and the tuition of Dugal Stewart had well supplied the defects of an Oxford education in all that concerned metaphysical lore. To a prodigious memory he added a lively imagination, even in matters unconnected with the merriment of humour, or the playfulness of wit. And it was none of the least enviable of his great qualities that, in union with all those endowments, and in spite of that fortune and station usually so inimical of laborious pursuits, he possessed the faculty of intense application; passing his life by preference in study, and having acquired the habits of unremitting intellectual labour as completely as if he had been born a poor man, by necessity become a student, gifted with a slow understanding, and at once devoid of fancy and of acuteness.

This distinguished man had early become a consummate classical scholar. The taste which habitually evolving the remains of ancient genius had refined to the most exquisite pitch, and even rendered so fastidious as to impede his own exertions, was subsequently enlarged and variegated by his marvellous facility of acquiring modern language. Nor was there a greater writer from Homer to Dante, and from Dante to Byron, with whose productions he was not perfectly familiar. His acquaintance with the records of history, and with the principles of political as well as moral and metaphysical science, was extensive and profound. “*Est et scientia comprehendenda rerum plurimarum, quâ verborum volubilitas inanis atque irridenda est;*

et ipsa oratio conformanda non solum electione, sed etiam constructione verborum; et omnes animorum motus, quos hominum generi rerum natura tribuit, penitus pernoscenti, quod omnis vis ratioque dicendi, eorum, qui audiunt, mentibus, aut sedandis, aut excitandis expromenda est. Aecedat eodem oportet lepos quidam, facetiæque et eruditio libero digna, celeritasque et brevitās et respondendi, et lacessendi, subtili venustate atque urbanitate conjunctâ. Tenenda præterea est omnis antiquitas, exemplorumque vis:"—(Cic. *De Or. Lib. I.*)

All this was well known when he entered into public life, and vast expectations were raised of his success. Nor can it be said with any truth that these were disappointed. For though he made no progress, during the first two sessions of his sitting in parliament, while he joined Mr. Pitt, who estimated him at the highest rate, and Mr. Canning, whom he long after joined, having quitted him for a season; yet having been one of those most conscientious and honourable Pittites who adhered with Lord Grenville to Mr. Fox, after Mr. Pitt had been, unhappily for his fame and for his happiness, induced to break up the coalition in 1804, and take office alone, Mr. Ward, in the short session of 1807, before the dissolution, distinguished himself above all competitors, by a most able and eloquent advocacy of the slave trade abolition; in him rendered the more valuable and more meritorious, by the fact, that he was heir to ample West Indian possessions. In 1808, and still more in 1810, when the Walcheren expedition was brought into discussion at the commencement of the session, he delivered some of the most splendid orations which have been heard in parliament; whether we regard the closeness of their reasoning, the force of their sarcasm, or the inimitable beauty of their composition. His health in some of the following years was so much broken, that he rarely took part in debate; but he returned to public life, in the high station of secretary for foreign affairs, when Mr. Canning's administration was formed in 1827; and continued in that great and difficult office until the secession of the Canning party at

Whitsuntide of the following year. Steady to the principles of his leader, he offered the most uncompromising resistance to all parliamentary reform; attacked with extraordinary vehemence and the most distinguished ability, the bill of 1831; and alone, or almost alone of his party, held by its peculiar creed, when happily for the country, as we think, Lords Melbourne, Palmerston, and Glenelg had joined with "the brave Gyas and the brave Cloanthus," in deserting their colours, and ranging themselves under the banners of reform.

To say that Mr. Ward failed in answering the large expectations formed of him by all parties, is, therefore, a very great mistake. His capacity and his acquirements were fully developed, and bore him both to high honours, to great fame, and to exalted station. But he had an over-sensitiveness, an exquisitely fastidious taste, a nervous temperament which was, perhaps, never uncombined with physical constitution, and ended in the most melancholy mental as well as bodily disease. Unsteadiness of purpose, therefore—unwillingness to risk, and reluctance to exert—incapacity to make up his mind either as to the measures of others, or his own conduct—greatly chequered his existence as a public man during the latter years of his brilliant, but unhappy life. At length, what seemed only to have been a morbid affection of the will, extended itself to the understanding, and laid waste one of the most acute, subtle, powerful, intellects ever bestowed upon man. A cloud overspread his whole mind; he ceased utterly out of society; he, who was among its most brilliant ornaments, could no more be admitted to its intercourse; he, whose faculties of every kind and in the most extraordinary combination, hardly had known an equal, was reduced to the darkness of entire aberration of intellect; and fate, untimely and relentless, more, far more, than counterbalanced all the singular gifts with which nature and fortune had striven together in order to enrich him, and left us all the melancholy reflection, how little those gifts avail here below!—

“ ——— Manibus data lilia plenis :
 Purpureos spargam flores, animamque nepotis
 His saltem adcumulem donis, et fungar inani
 Munere.” *Æn. Lib. vi. 884.*

From these lofty, though mournful contemplations, we must once more descend to the mean level of the book before us. That this writer is of the class to which the notorious Mary Ann Clarke belonged, as far as regards the revelations of private anecdote, and making money of her own journals and other people's letters, we have already suggested. But it appears, too, which might not have been so readily expected, that she has cultivated her sister-artist's acquaintance. Her object in doing so, is unfolded by herself. It was in the way of business—of their common trade—as one dealer in the foul wares of improper books or prints may communicate with another in the fartherance of their forbidden traffic. She has occasion to cite Mary Ann Clarke as her authority for a scandalous anecdote, respecting the royal family, and she adds, “ You know how I *wheedled* her to show me the notes she had prepared for her own memoirs.”* We ask what she would have said of any of those exalted persons whom she slandered in each page of her work, had they been guilty of associating with an infamous woman like this, and for so sordid a purpose?

One other anecdote recorded by herself,—one more trait of her sketched by her own hand, and we have done. “ The princess,” (says she, Vol. II. 198,) “ has heaped benefits on Lady C. Campbell, and sent her a thousand ducats in hard cash as soon as she arrived,” (at Genoa.) How does she requite this kindness? How relieve herself from this loan of gratitude, for the benefit so heaped upon her? By this abominable publication! Is she callous and insensible to the cruelty and the ingratitude she is thus committing? No such thing. She can feel it criminal to write down the anecdotes which no eye but her own can ever see. “ WRITING

* The Italics are the writer's own, to call our attention to her cunning tricks.

these notes, though they are never to meet any eye but my own, seems to me unamiable: for I am more than overwhelmed with kindness." Where, then, were the feelings thus roused by the mere scratching of the solitary pen, when the machinery of the printing press was, by her own mercenary hand made to play, and the recorded scandal to resound through all the newspapers and in all the circulating libraries of the empire? Verily, she has pronounced with her own mouth her own condemnation, and under this sentence we leave her.*

NOTE.

[Edinburgh Review, July 1838.]

WE have received from Lord Stourton a Letter respecting our notice, in the above article, of Mrs. Fitzherbert's marriage; and we have much pleasure in laying before our readers a communication so creditable to the feelings of the noble writer.

"To the Editor of the Edinburgh Review.

"SIR,—A misstatement, no doubt unintentional, of the circumstances attending the marriage of Mrs. Fitzher-

* We are aware that we have, in this long paper, confined our attention entirely to the general subject of the abuses of the press, and the characters of statesmen and princes now no more. We have purposely kept ourselves within those comparatively narrow limits, and we think our reasons justify this course. As to the press, we felt it sufficient for one occasion, to open the general subject, and reserve for a future discussion, those most important details with which we are enabled to illustrate our positions, and which we shall hereafter lay at large before the reader. As to the historical portion of this article, we felt it a safer course, and one that exposed us both to fewer temptations and less misconstruction, to avoid sketching the characters, or commenting on the conduct of living statesmen and living monarchs. But we desire it to be distinctly understood, that we have so abstained, without entertaining the least doubt, that the public conduct and public character of living men and women, too, in high station, falls within the legitimate scope of our duty. Our next article of this kind, will comprehend the other great characters of the past age.

bert, in one of your late Articles, being liable to a construction, in the views of members of her religious communion, injurious to her reputation, you will, I am sure, readily oblige me by inserting in your next number the following more accurate statement, for the fidelity of which I pledge my honour.

“The marriage ceremony was performed, *not out of this kingdom*, as you have stated, but in her own drawing-room, in her house in town, in the presence of an officiating Protestant clergyman, and of two of her own nearest relatives. All the parties being now deceased, to ordinary readers this discrepancy will appear of little moment; as the ceremony, wherever it was performed, could confer no legal rights; and no issue followed this union. But when I inform you, that in the one case,—that stated in your Article, it would have been an invalid marriage as affecting the conscience of Mrs. Fitzherbert in the sight of her own church; and that in the other case, it formed a conscientious connexion in the opinion of such portions of Christendom as hold communion with the See of Rome, I am confident you will permit this statement, under my name and responsibility, to appear in your Journal. I shall, moreover, add—that the conscientious validity of the contract depended upon the fact, that the discipline of the Council of Trent as to marriage has never been received in this country. I owe this plain counter-statement to the memory of Mrs. Fitzherbert, in order that aspersions which, from peculiar circumstances she was herself unable to rebut when living, should not be inscribed without contradiction on her tomb. That I have not officiously imposed on myself an unnecessary duty in endeavouring to protect the fame of this virtuous and distinguished lady, or am about to mislead by erroneous facts, I must appeal to the following extract from one of Mrs. Fitzherbert’s letters to myself, which closely followed certain confidential communications, on which I rely for the perfect accuracy of my information on this delicate subject.

“‘My dear Lord Stourton,

“‘I trust whenever it pleases God to remove me from

this world, my conduct and character, in your hands. will not disgrace my family or my friends. Paris, Dec. 7, 1833.'"

"I remain, Sir,

"Your obedient humble servant,

"STOURTON."

"*Mansfield Street 30th June, 1838.*"

In complying with Mr. Perceval's request to reprint the following Letter, which has already appeared in some of the newspapers, we must accompany it with one or two observations.

Mr. Perceval cannot possibly be acquainted with all the circumstances of the case, which his very natural and commendable filial affection has induced him to discuss. The statement given in our last number was the topic of constant and uncontradicted comment during his respected father's life—certainly ever since the disclosures of Spring, 1813. If the Book, as intended to be published by Lord Eldon and him, had a bookseller's, and especially a printer's name to it, the statement is incorrect, how often soever it may have been repeated; but we must remind our correspondent, that no kind of contradiction will be given to the statement by merely producing *a Book* long since prepared for the press, with both publisher's and printer's names. Let him produce what his father and Lord Eldon intended to circulate in 1806 and 1807, and let us see whose names were upon that.

The assertion that the Book "was simply and solely a collection of authentic documents," would astonish us if it did not prove that Mr. Perceval cannot have seen *the Book*. We have seen it—so have very many others; and it contained, amongst other matter, an elaborate and vehement defence of the princess; a laboured commentary on the evidence; and the most unsparing remarks upon her royal highness's persecutors.

“ *To the Editor of the Edinburgh Review.* ”

“ *St. Leonard's on Sea, May 8, 1838.* ”

“ SIR—I have been requested by my eldest brother to transmit to you the annexed copy of a Letter, addressed by him to the *Morning Post*, of which he had not time himself to make and forward a copy to you, being on the point of going abroad when the Article to which it relates was shown him.

“ He desired me to state that he would have preferred to address it to yourself in the first instance, had it been possible to allow a misstatement so injurious to the character of the late Mr. Perceval to remain uncontradicted for so long a period as the nature of your publication would render inevitable;—and also to express his confidence that you will see that it is every way incumbent upon you to insert the Letter in your next Number.

I am, Sir, your most obedient humble servant,

“ DUDLEY M. PERCEVAL.”

“ *To the Editor of the Morning Post.* ”

“ *St. Leonard's, May 5.* ”

“ SIR—I have just been shown an Article in the last number of the *Edinburgh Review*, which contains statements concerning the printing, in 1807, by the late Lord Eldon and the Right Honourable Spencer Perceval, of that which commonly has been called ‘The Book,’ which are so untrue, and so dishonouring to my father’s character, that I feel it my duty to request you to do me the favour to insert this letter in your paper.

“ The most material of the statements I refer to are as follows:

“ 1st. That Lord Eldon and Mr. Perceval ‘entered into a conspiracy to evade and break the laws,’ and especially an act passed by themselves, ‘to prohibit, under severe penalties, any one from printing any thing whatever, without appending to it his name and place of abode,’ by secretly printing a libellous work.

“ 2d. That all this was done by them for the pur-

pose of blackening the character of the heir-apparent to the throne.

"3d. That the 'libels,' thus 'secretly printed against him,' were '*too outrageous to find a publisher.*'

"The Book in question was simply and solely a collection of authentic documents, comprising, and entitled 'The Proceedings and Correspondence upon the subject of the Inquiry into the Conduct of Her Royal Highness, the Princess of Wales.' That inquiry had been a secret one. The result was a Report from the commissioners, declaring the entire failure of the charge against her royal highness. The princess, was not, however, received at court. The inference was, that her exclusion was justified by what had come to light. One painful but sole resource remained for her. She was advised, and she authorized her advisers, to print the whole of the accusations against her, and her defence; and she notified to the king (George the Third) and to his ministers, that, unless within a given period she was again received at court as heretofore, she should be compelled, however reluctantly, to publish the whole proceedings. About this time the whig ministry went out of office, and their successors advised his majesty to grant immediately the requests which her legal advisers had counselled her to make. Accordingly, she was both received at court and visited by the king, and apartments were assigned to her in Kensington Palace; and as the object had been attained which alone could justify such a publication, 'The Book' was most properly and carefully suppressed.

"Such is the true and simple history of 'The Book.' It was printed for avowed publication by her royal highness, if necessary; it was printed privately, that it might not escape into circulation unless that necessity should arise.

"But it is utterly untrue that the printer's name and place of abode were not appended to it. It is utterly untrue that it could find no publisher. The names and places of abode of the printer and of *two* publishers appear on the title-page.

"It is equally untrue that it libels the Prince of Wales:

or was printed 'for the purpose of blackening his character.' The purpose for which it was printed has been already stated; and there is not one attempt at recrimination or slander against her royal husband from beginning to end of the princess's defence.

"Renewing my request that you would do me the favour of inserting this letter in your paper."

"I am, Sir,

"Your obedient humble servant,

"SPENCER PERCEVAL."

THE

QUEEN'S LETTER TO THE KING.

SIR,

AFTER the unparalleled and unprovoked persecution, which, during a series of years, has been carried on against me under the name and authority of your majesty—and which persecution, instead of being mollified by time, time has rendered only more and more malignant and unrelenting—it is not without a great sacrifice of private feeling that I now, even in the way of remonstrance, bring myself to address this letter to your majesty. But, bearing in mind that royalty rests on the basis of public good; that to this paramount consideration all others ought to submit; and aware of the consequences that may result from the present unconstitutional, illegal, and hitherto unheard-of proceedings;—with a mind thus impressed, I cannot refrain from laying my grievous wrongs once more before your majesty, in the hope that the justice which your majesty may, by evil-minded counsellors, be still disposed to refuse to the claims of a dutiful, faithful, and injured wife, you may be induced to yield to considerations connected with the honour and dignity of your crown, the stability of your throne, the tranquillity of your dominions, the happiness and safety of your just and loyal people, whose generous hearts revolt at oppression and cruelty, and especially when perpetrated by a perversion and a mockery of the laws. .

A sense of what is due to my character and sex, forbids me to refer minutely to the real causes of our domestic separation, or to the numerous and unmerited insults offered me previously to that period; but leaving

to your majesty to reconcile with the marriage-vow the act of driving, by such means, a wife from beneath your roof, with an infant in her arms, your majesty will permit me to remind you, that that act was entirely your own; that the separation, so far from being sought for by me, was a sentence pronounced upon me, without any cause assigned, other than that of your own inclinations, which, as your majesty was pleased to allege, were not under your control.

Not to have felt, with regard to myself, chagrin at this decision of your majesty, would have argued great insensibility to the obligations of decorum; not to have dropped a tear in the face of that beloved child, whose future sorrows were then but too easy to foresee, would have marked me as unworthy the name of mother; but, not to have submitted to it without repining, would have indicated a consciousness of demerit, or a want of those feelings which belong to affronted and insulted female honour.

“The ‘tranquil and comfortable society’ tendered to me by your majesty, formed, in my mind, but a poor compensation for the grief occasioned by considering the wound given to public morals in the fatal example produced by the indulgence of your majesty’s inclinations; more especially when I contemplated the disappointment of the nation, who had so munificently provided for our union, who had fondly cherished such pleasing hopes of happiness arising from that union, and who had hailed it with such affectionate and rapturous joy.”

But, alas! even tranquillity and comfort were too much for me to enjoy. From the very threshold of your majesty’s mansion, the mother of your child was pursued by spies, conspirators, and traitors, employed, encouraged, and rewarded, to lay snares for the feet, and to plot against the reputation and life, of her whom your majesty had so recently and so solemnly vowed to honour, to love, and to cherish.

In withdrawing from the embraces of my parents, in giving my hand to the son of George the Third, and the

heir-apparent to the British throne, nothing less than a voice from Heaven would have made me fear injustice or wrong of any kind. What, then, was my astonishment at finding, that treasons against me had been carried on and matured, perjuries against me had been methodized and embodied, a secret tribunal had been held, a trial of my actions had taken place, and a decision had been made upon those actions, without my having been informed of the nature of the charge, or of the names of the witnesses; and what words can express the feelings excited by the fact, that this proceeding was founded on a request made, and on evidence furnished, by order of the father of my child, and my natural as well as legal guardian and protector?

Notwithstanding, however, the unprecedented conduct of that tribunal—conduct which has since undergone, even in parliament, severe and unanswered animadversions, and which has been also censured in minutes of the privy council—notwithstanding the secrecy of the proceedings of this tribunal—notwithstanding the strong temptation to the giving of false evidence against me before it—notwithstanding that there was no opportunity afforded me of rebutting that evidence—notwithstanding all these circumstances, so decidedly favourable to my enemies—even this secret tribunal acquitted me of all crime, and thereby pronounced my principal accusers to have been guilty of the grossest perjury. But it was now (after the trial was over) discovered, that the nature of the tribunal was such as to render false swearing before it *not legally criminal!* And thus, at the suggestion and request of your majesty, had been created, to take cognizance of and try my conduct, a tribunal competent to administer oaths, competent to examine witnesses on oath, competent to try, competent to acquit or condemn, and competent, moreover, to screen those who had sworn falsely against me from suffering the pains and penalties which the law awards to wilful and corrupt perjury. Great as my indignation naturally must have been at this shameful evasion of law and justice, that indignation was lost in pity for him who could lower his princely plumes to the dust by

giving his countenance and favour to the most conspicuous of those abandoned and notorious perjurers.

Still there was one whose upright mind nothing could warp, in whose breast injustice never found a place, whose hand was always ready to raise the unfortunate, and to rescue the oppressed. While that good and gracious father and sovereign remained in the exercise of his royal functions, his unoffending daughter-in-law had nothing to fear. As long as the protecting hand of your late ever-beloved and ever-lamented father was held over me, I was safe. But the melancholy event which deprived the nation of the active exertions of its virtuous king, bereft me of friend and protector, and of all hope of future tranquillity and safety. To calumniate your innocent wife was now the shortest road to royal favour; and to betray her was to lay the sure foundation of boundless riches and titles of honour. Before claims like these, talent, virtue, long services, your own personal friendships, your royal engagements, promises, and pledges, written as well as verbal, melted into air. Your cabinet was founded on this basis. You took to your councils, men, of whose persons, as well as whose principles, you had invariably expressed the strongest dislike. The interest of the nation, and even your own feelings, in all other respects, were sacrificed to the gratification of your desire to aggravate my sufferings, and ensure my humiliation. You took to your councils and your bosom men whom you hated, whose abandonment of, and whose readiness to sacrifice me were their only merits, and whose power has been exercised in a manner, and has been attended, with consequences, worthy of its origin. From this unprincipled and unnatural union have sprung the manifold evils which this nation has now to endure, and which present a mass of misery and of degradation, accompanied with acts of tyranny and cruelty, rather than have seen which inflicted on his industrious, faithful, and brave people, your royal father would have perished at the head of that people,

When, to calumniate, revile, and betray me, became the sure path to honour and riches, it would have been

strange indeed if calumniators, revilers, and traitors, had not abounded. Your court became much less a scene of polished manners and refined intercourse than of low intrigue and scurrility. Spies, Bacchanalian tale-bearers, and foul conspirators, swarmed in those places which had before been the resort of sobriety, virtue, and honour. To enumerate all the various privations and mortifications which I had to endure—all the insults that were wantonly heaped upon me, from the day of your elevation to the regency to that of my departure for the continent—would be to describe every species of personal offence that can be offered to, and every pain short of bodily violence that can be inflicted on any human being. Bereft of parent, brother, and father-in-law, and my husband for my deadliest foe; seeing those who have promised me support, bought by rewards to be amongst my enemies; restrained from accusing my foes in the face of the world, out of regard for the character of the father of my child, and from a desire to prevent her happiness from being disturbed; shunned from motives of selfishness by those who were my natural associates; living in obscurity, while I ought to have been the centre of all that was splendid; thus humbled, I had one consolation left—the love of my dear and only child. To permit me to enjoy this was too great an indulgence. To see my daughter; to fold her in my arms; to mingle my tears with hers; to receive her cheering caresses, and to hear from her lips assurances of never-ceasing love;—thus to be comforted, consoled, upheld, and blessed, was too much to be allowed me. Even on the slave mart, the cries of “Oh! my mother, my mother! Oh! my child, my child!” have prevented a separation of the victims of avarice. But your advisors, more inhuman than the slave-dealers, remorselessly tore the mother from the child.

Thus bereft of the society of my child, or reduced to the necessity of imbittering her life by struggles to preserve that society, I resolved on a temporary absence, in the hope that time might restore me to her in happier days. Those days, alas! were never to come. To mothers—and those mothers who have been suddenly

bereft of the best and most affectionate and only daughters—it belongs to estimate my sufferings and my wrongs. Such mothers will judge of my affliction upon hearing of the death of my child, and upon my calling to recollection the last look, the last words, and all the affecting circumstances of our separation. Such mothers will see the depth of my sorrows. Every being with a heart of humanity in its bosom, will drop a tear in sympathy with me. And will not the world, then, learn with indignation, that this event, calculated to soften the hardest heart, was the signal for new conspiracies, and indefatigable efforts for the destruction of this afflicted mother? Your majesty had torn my child from me; you had deprived me of the power of being at hand to succour her; you had taken from me the possibility of hearing of her last prayers for her mother; you saw me bereft, forlorn, and broken-hearted; and this was the moment you chose for redoubling your persecutions.

Let the world pass its judgment on the constituting of a commission, in a foreign country, consisting of inquisitors, spies, and informers, to discover, collect, and arrange matters of accusation against your wife, without any complaint having been communicated to her: let the world judge of the employment of ambassadors in such a business, and of the enlisting of foreign courts in the enterprise: but on the measures which have been adopted to give final effect to these preliminary proceedings it is for me to speak; it is for me to remonstrate with your majesty; it is for me to protest; it is for me to apprise you of my determination.

I have always demanded a *fair trial*. This is what I now demand, and this is refused me. Instead of a fair trial, I am to be subjected to a sentence by the parliament, passed in the shape of a *law*. Against this I protest, and upon the following grounds:—

The injustice of refusing me a clear and distinct charge, of refusing me the names of the witnesses, of refusing me the names of the places where the alleged acts have been committed; these are sufficiently flagrant and revolting: but it is against the *constitution of the court*

itself that I particularly object, and that I must solemnly protest.

Whatever may be the precedents as to bills of pains and penalties, none of them, except those relating to the Queen of Henry the Eighth, can apply here: for here your majesty is the *plaintiff*. Here it is intended by the bill to do you what you deem *good*, and to do *me great harm*. You are therefore a party, and the only complaining party.

You have made your complaints to the House of Lords. You have conveyed to this house written documents sealed up. A secret committee of the house have examined these documents. They have reported that there are grounds of proceeding; and then the house, merely upon that report, have brought forward a bill containing the most outrageous slanders on me, and sentencing me to divorce and degradation.

The injustice of putting forth this bill to the world for six weeks before it is even proposed to afford me an opportunity of contradicting its allegations is too manifest not to have shocked the nation; and, indeed, the proceedings even thus far are such as to convince every one that no justice is intended me. But if none of these proceedings, if none of these clear indications of a determination to do me wrong had taken place, I should see, in the constitution of the House of Lords itself, a certainty that I could expect no justice at its hands.

Your majesty's ministers have *advised* this prosecution; they are responsible for the advice they give; they are liable to *punishment* if they fail to make good their charges; and not only are they the part of my *judges*, but it is they who have *brought in the bill*; and it is too notorious that they have *always a majority* in the house; so that, without any other, here is ample proof that the house will decide in favour of the bill, and of course, against me.

But farther, there are reasons for your ministers having a majority in this case, and which reasons do not apply to common cases. Your majesty is the *plaintiff*; to you it belongs to appoint and to elevate peers. Many of the present peers have been raised to that

dignity by yourself, and almost the whole can be, at your will and pleasure, farther elevated. The far greater part of the peers hold, by themselves and their families, offices, pensions, and other emoluments, solely at the will and pleasure of your majesty, and these, of course, your majesty can take away whenever you please. There are more than *four-fifths* of the peers in this situation, and there are many of them who might thus be deprived of the far better part of their incomes.

If, contrary to all expectation, there should be found in some peers, likely to amount to a majority, a disposition to reject the bill, some of these peers may be ordered away to their ships, regiments, governments, and other duties; and, which is an equally alarming power, new peers may be created for the purpose, and give their vote in the decision. That your majesty's ministers would advise these measures, if found necessary to render their prosecution successful, there can be very little doubt; seeing that they have hitherto stooped at nothing, however unjust or odious.

To regard such a body as a *court of justice* would be to calumniate that sacred name; and for me to suppress an expression of my opinion on the subject, would be tacitly to lend myself to my own destruction, as well as to an imposition upon the nation and the world.

In the House of Commons I can discover no better grounds of security. The power of your majesty's ministers is the same in both houses; and your majesty is well acquainted with the fact, that a majority of this house is composed of persons placed in it by the peers and by your majesty's treasury.

It really gives me pain to state these things to your majesty; and, if it gives your majesty pain, I beg that it may be observed, and remembered, that the statement has been forced from me. I must either protest against this mode of trial, or by tacitly consenting to it, suffer my honour to be sacrificed. No innocence can secure the accused if the judges and jurors be chosen by the accuser; and if I were tacitly to submit to a tribunal of this description, I should be instrumental in my own dishonour.

On these grounds I protest against this species of trial. I demand a trial in a court where the jurors are taken impartially from amongst the people, and where the proceedings are open and fair. Such a trial I court, and to no other will I willingly submit. If your majesty persevere in the present proceeding, I shall, even in the Houses of Parliament, face my accusers; but I shall regard any decision they may make against me as not in the smallest degree reflecting on my honour, and I will not, except compelled by actual force, submit to any sentence which shall not be pronounced by a *court of justice*.

I have now frankly laid before your majesty a statement of my wrongs, and a declaration of my views and intentions. You have cast upon me every slur to which the female character is liable. Instead of loving, honouring, and cherishing me, agreeably to your solemn vow, you have pursued me with hatred and scorn, and with all the means of destruction. You wrested from me my child, and with her my only comfort and consolation. You sent me sorrowing through the world, and even in my sorrows pursued me with unrelenting persecution. Having left me nothing but my innocence, you would now, by a mockery of justice, deprive me even of the reputation of possessing that. The poisoned bowl and the poinard are means more manly than perjured witnesses and partial tribunals; and they are less cruel, inasmuch as life is less valuable than honour. If my life would have satisfied your majesty, you should have had it on the sole condition of giving me a place in the same tomb with my child; but since you would send me dishonoured to the grave, I will resist the attempt with all the means that it shall please God to give me.

(Signed)

CAROLINE, R.

Brandenburg-house, Aug. 7, 1820.

GEORGE THE THIRD AND FOURTH.*

THE author of this well-meant and interesting pamphlet, is one of the most able, as well as the most respectable persons, who have ever appeared at the court of this country. Although we may differ in opinion with him on general subjects, and although we cannot at all agree in the estimate which he has formed of those characters whom it is the object of his publication to defend against our strictures, we yet are bound to admit his claims to a respectful and even a favourable hearing, in defence of persons whom he enjoyed singular opportunities of knowing, and to whose merits, after their death, he bears his disinterested testimony.

We must begin by admitting, to a certain extent, the truth of an observation which closes his tract, that the person who holds an office at court, or the confidential servant of a king or a prince, is not necessarily, as the common opinion goes, "a sycophant, and habitually a flatterer, or ready to do dirty work." If any proof were wanting, that the general impression on this point is far too sweeping, it would only be necessary to name Sir Herbert Taylor, who, for above thirty years held the most important and confidential situation about court that any subject could fill; and whose nature is as utterly incapable of sycophancy as it is of dishonesty—as far above deceiving a master as above maltreating an

* Remarks on an article in the *Edinburgh Review*, No. 135, on the times of George the Third and George the Fourth. By Lieutenant-General, Sir Herbert Taylor, G. C. B.

inferior; and one whom no prince would ever have seen again near his person, had he dared to propose to him the performance of any degrading office. We are very far from believing that all, or the greater number of men in those stations, resemble Sir Herbert in this particular. We are satisfied that the inferior characters which generally surround thrones, seldom exhibit any independence of principle; and not unfrequently lend themselves to the performance of unworthy tasks by mean compliances. The whole history of courts, the unvaried annals of royal and of ordinary human nature, bear testimony to the truth of our opinion. But that the rule is not universal, and that there are sometimes found splendid exceptions, we admit. Nay, we will go farther in agreeing with our author, and allow that much more truth is spoken privately at courts by dependants, even by the inferior order of dependants, than is generally supposed; probably much more than is pleasing to royal ears, and certainly much more than royal minds ever profit by. It has been our lot to know instances of this fact, which left no room for doubting, that towards those exalted individuals the duty,—the painful and even perilous duty, of speaking the displeasing truth, was discharged by persons who gained very little credit for so doing with the world at large. It is also to be considered, that there oftentimes subsists a greater degree of familiarity between princes, and their immediate attendants, than between private individuals and their friends. This naturally leads to advice and hints and warnings rarely given by the most intimate of other men's associates; not to mention that the prince's friend has a direct interest in his master's welfare, which a private gentleman's comrade really cannot have. But then we must add, that the practice, if often repeated, has never failed, according to our observation, to beget an impatience and even dislike in the illustrious bosom; consequently, the connexion either ceased in a short time, or was continued upon a "reformed footing"—that is, upon greater caution and abstinence in tendering warning or advice. But we must repeat, that we firmly believe the whole course of Sir Herbert

Taylor's exercise of such a delicate office, and such an important one as never before fell into the hands of any courtier, was throughout marked by the most unsullied honour towards all parties with whom he came in contact—whether monarchs, or their families, or their ministers, or private individuals. Nor have we any doubt whatever, that upon all occasions his best advice was offered according to the dictates of a scrupulous conscience, and a judgment hardly to be surpassed in clearness and calmness, although certainly biassed by what we should call some very erroneous opinions—the result of early prejudices not yet thrown off. It is a very inferior praise to add, that in the exercise of a most difficult and laborious duty he was one of the ablest, indeed, the most mastery men of business who ever filled any public employment. In stating these things, we give the result of a testimony, uniform and concurrent, borne to the merits of this distinguished individual, by all parties with whom he ever was brought in contact.

We now proceed to this pamphlet, and we shall shortly state why we still differ with Sir Herbert Taylor, on most of his points; but where we think he has proved any thing favourable to the personages in question, we shall give him and them the full benefit of the proofs, by recording the facts in our own pages. The interests of truth and justice require this, and we cannot possibly have any other to serve.

It is highly characteristic of his manly and honest nature, that he begins with expressing those feelings of scorn and disgust with which he, as well as all other right thinking persons, were filled by a perusal of the book that called forth our observations, and gave occasion to our sketches of character. But enough of a work now, it is to be hoped, consigned to oblivion as well as contempt. Let us, before we proceed farther, only protest against Sir Herbert Taylor's assumption, that our portraitures were influenced by either "rancorous" feelings of a personal kind, or motives of "party hostility" towards any of the royal persons of whom we were called to treat. There really was not, nor could there be, the least intermixture of such sentiments. Party

had nothing at all to do with the matter; the connexion of either George the father or George the son with party, is now only matter of history; and they who support the present ministry, are supporting some of those who were the ministers of both princes, and others who were, at least, the son's most cherished personal friends. We sought truth, and the truth only; if we coloured highly, it was because the facts appeared to be darkened by deep shades; if we spoke strongly, it was because our indignation was roused; if we still refuse to lower our tone of reprobation, it is because we think—calmly and deliberately think—that Sir Herbert Taylor has, after his well-meant attempt, left the case against them where he found it; and that he himself, if natural feelings of personal friendship did not blind him, would agree with us, in viewing their misdeeds as we formerly did, and as, at this hour, we still regard them. The word “libel,” is repeatedly employed by our author, in referring to our pages—and about a word we will not quarrel. But let him be pleased to observe that, according to this phraseology, many pages in all histories must change their name; that some sound and zealous royalist historians, not excepting Lord Clarendon, must change their names; and that in future we must quote the “libels” and not the annals of Tacitus, or even the *Decades* of Livy. The pain which the historian may give to many friends, was never yet reckoned any reason either for not recording recent events, or for suppressing discreditable truths; and our author has not quite shown his accustomed candour, when he passes over those passages in our pages which betokened a disposition to commend, where the truth allowed of praise, and even to soften the harsher features of character, by casting the blame rather upon the station than the man. His most cherished friend in the royal family, was the Duke of York. What writer on the liberal side of the question ever defended that amiable prince before ourselves? Sir Herbert Taylor should have reflected on this, as well as other parts of our paper, before he pronounced the whole a libel, and ed-its rancour to the violence of party animosity.

To begin with George the Third.—We stated that his understanding was narrow and that no culture had enlarged it. Our author cannot deny the latter part of this proposition; and he says that the king admitted and regretted his want of education. But he says that his majesty afterwards read the history of his own country, which we will venture to say, every prince knows almost by heart; just as the most ignorant country gentlemen are found to know the pedigrees of their own families and even of their neighbours; he added to this, according to our author, the study of the laws and constitution of England; but as it was not till 1805, on his blindness, that their intercourse began, we may be allowed to doubt whether George III. knew more of those subjects than every king must, who attends to the business of his high office; and there is no doubt that his attention to his own business was most unremitting. This ought to have been stated by us, if, indeed, we did not admit it by implication. Sir Herbert Taylor adds, which we believe to be in a sense true, that he possessed “a knowledge of business in every department, and in all its details, such as, perhaps, no one man ever possessed.” Possibly he might, if by this is meant the common public departments. This knowledge is not so rare among sovereigns as to make it a great marvel. They come in contact with most departments; and they can always tell very accurately what particular matter belongs to each particular office. They are exceedingly nice in this knowledge; they are very peremptory in exacting attention to it; the kind of knowledge itself, like heraldry and etiquette, in which all princes are adepts, suits their taste, and appertains to their station; besides, they find protection in requiring an observance of all the rules that divide power, and keep their ministers to their several departments. That George III. had any enlarged knowledge of parliamentary learning—that he was at all versed in the constitution or jurisdiction of courts of justice—that he understood the details of banking or of commerce, much less their principles—that he knew any thing of colonial, and still less of East Indian affairs—or that he had any but the most

vague and personal knowledge of the interests of foreign courts—we will not believe, unless we see proofs far more exact than our author's general assertion; which, indeed, can only apply to the very limited branch of information first mentioned.

As for the extent of the king's understanding, our author deals in generals, and has really little to say. That he had strong prejudices, to which he obstinately adhered to "the last," is admitted; but these related, it seems, "chiefly to matters of inferior importance, matters of taste and opinion." There is much in this same word "chiefly," however: and, accordingly, it turns out, that our author appears to allow that his prejudices on the trifling subjects of America and Ireland, were unfortunately strong; though he unaccountably would cast some of the former errors upon his ministers, when it is notorious to all mankind that they were his own. Then, as for his notions of prerogative, and his determination to support it, our author approves of this, as according to his principles he must: we, of course, disapprove.

But then comes the pinch of the question, as regards the amiable or unamiable nature of the man. We distinctly stated that where his prerogative did not interfere, he was amiable and exemplary,—as a husband, and a father, and a friend. We placed him above almost all princes in this respect. But we added, that where his personal feelings about his prerogative were concerned, all was darkened, and became the reverse of kindly or humane. Among other instances, we gave his dislike of his eldest son. How is this charge met? A general defiance is first given to produce "any circumstances which can justify our colouring." We at once accept the challenge thus very fairly given; and as it will not be deemed enough if we refer only to the sanguinary feelings which he perseveringly displayed towards his American subjects, and the violence with which he repeatedly, in letters to his ministers, which we have now under our eyes, threatened to leave this kingdom, and go to revel in absolute power upon the despotic and petty throne of his German ancestors, we shall refer

to more precise proofs drawn from individual cases. Mr. Fox, during the last year of his life, was this king's minister, and was only too much disposed to humour his Hanovarian and warlike propensities. Nothing had he ever done to thwart his wishes. The delicate personal subject of the Duke of York's uncontrolled command of the army; the equally tender point of the catholic question, had been carefully avoided; and the king had admitted that no minister, in his own department of foreign affairs, ever gave him more entire satisfaction, both by his capacity, his business-like habits, and the courtesy of his personal intercourse. Yet when he learned the much-wished for news that this great man had a dropsy, and was incurably stricken with the malady, his exultation was couched in language grounded upon his own personal observation, and such language as we do not care to repeat. But if it be said that hearsay might exaggerate all this, we assert that his own handwriting respecting Lord Chatham, remains to convict him of feelings not other than inhuman, where his prejudices, and above all, his tyrannical propensities, were thwarted. We allude to his contemplating the death, and still more the "decrepitude" of that illustrious person, with manifest satisfaction;—himself having once suffered in early life, under the visitation of Divine Providence, which laid his own faculties, such as they were, prostrate. Let us add, that some friends of the family, and of the monarchy, quite as firmly attached to both as Sir Herbert Taylor, have pronounced the opinion, that a publication of the private correspondence of this revered monarch, with his ministers, during the American war, would put the very existence of the constitution in jeopardy;—so full is it of proofs of a fierce, tyrannical disposition. That correspondence now lies before us.

But as to his hatred of his eldest son, who ever doubted it? Does Sir Herbert Taylor not know the thousand and one anecdotes of this inexhaustible subject, which every one of his courtiers knew by rote? He has defied us to cite these. The defiance is injudicious.

- What said his majesty to the lord in waiting, when his

royal highness made some frivolous excuse for some trivial omission—but which in a tyrannical parent's eye was of course inexcusable? Again we say the defiance is more frank than wise. Our author truly says that we had less access to George III. than himself and many others. Is he quite sure that we have not had access, all but direct, to George IV., and that we could not, without the slightest breach of confidence, give samples, which were indeed meant to be made known, of the treatment received by him from his tender parents? We use the plural, in order to answer by anticipation some also of the remarks upon Queen Charlotte's treatment of her son, while he was yet uncrowned with power. With that illustrious princess, too, our author may truly say our intercourse was not like his own. But is he quite sure that we never had access to another queen's society, the niece and daughter-in-law of that royal pair whom he so well knew, and whom he not always judiciously, though always honestly defends? Is it quite safe in him to fling out his general defiance, without being well assured that we have never seen the letters of both to the late queen—and that those of George III. betoken, at the least, all we have ever recorded of his affectionate nature towards the heir-apparent of his crown? Here we pause; for he has himself coupled his indiscreet defiance with a very prudent admission, which, in truth, seems to render our farther defence superfluous. "His disapprobation of the prince's politics, and of many things in the course pursued by his royal highness, amounted to dislike." This is a large admission, regard being had to the party making it; but far ampler if connected with the subject-matter. What signifies the denial which faintly and feebly follows. "I do not admit that it ever amounted to implacable aversion," &c. Does Sir Herbert Taylor really know so little of human nature as to believe that a father can dislike a son by halves? Why, the nearer the relation, the more natural the tie, violated or torn assunder, the more impossible is it that either the disruption can be partial, or the pain gentle, or the rankling wound which it leaves only skin deep. So it would be in any case of

parent and child. Who ever saw a mother gently hate a daughter, or a father hold in moderate aversion his son? But a king and his son—and his eldest son—his heir-apparent, who treads on his heels living, and must replace him dead—and that son in the hands of the Foxes and Sheridans, set up in opposition to his father king—and that father and King George III.! Really we waste words in showing that after our author's admitting the existence of marked dislike, all the rest followed of course; unless human nature, and kingly nature, and the nature of George III. had suffered a change in the one individual passage of his life which related to his son.

Our author takes some pains to refute—what he is wrong if he supposes we meant to assert as a fact—that George III.'s mind was never at any time sound. We only meant to state our very decided opinion, that ever since his first illness in 1788, possibly earlier, there was some mental imperfection, not unconnected with the obscuration of reason, and displayed in an extraordinarily astute and suspicious nature, very unreasonable prejudices, very strong dislikes.

He gives a curious anecdote of the change of ministry, in 1807, which we here quote:—

“When the change of administration took place in 1807, his majesty took counsel from himself only in the communications with those with whom he differed; and I am warranted in saying, that there existed not the slightest foundation for the reports which were then spread of advice secretly conveyed, or of influence behind the throne, or of communication, direct or indirect, with his previous ministers, pending the discussion with ‘the Talents,’ or before their removal from the administration had been established. Nay, on that occasion, he placed in my hands, unopened, a letter addressed to him, before that event was positively fixed, by one of the leaders of the opposite party, and I have it to this day, with a minute to that effect.

“The loss of sight was borne with exemplary patience and resignation; and neither this nor other trials pro-

duced, while his majesty continued in a sound state of mind, any ebullition of temper or harshness of manner or expression, which could occasion pain or uneasiness to his family and attendants. I declare, that during the whole period of my attendance upon King George III., not one sharp word, not one expression of unkindness or impatience escaped his majesty; and the change of deportment in this respect conveyed to me, at least, the first intimations of the approach of that calamity, of which I had the misfortune to witness the distressing progress and the melancholy effects."

We have cheerfully extended this quotation to the part which adds amiable and respectable proof of his good qualities. Let not Sir Herbert Taylor be offended if we remark that he bears so much testimony to the patient, or manly and kindly demeanour of his immediate successor under far less calamities. All who attended both him and the good King William, indulged in comparisons very unfavourable to the former, and nothing in these pages negatives this.

Our author is chivalrous in defence of Queen Charlotte. First, as to her understanding, which we had only described as "of the most ordinary kind;" he says she had "excellent sense, but not improved by any education." We are not aware that the two accounts are at all incompatible. "Her intercourse with many persons of information and talents enabled her to take a fair share in general conversation." This is very possible, and it is very moderate praise. The "persons of talents and information" who frequented her or her husband's society are not named, and we believe were not much known to the world. "Nor did she ever commit herself by what she said. She came to England with many German prejudices, which she does not appear to have entirely shaken off." In all this we can discover no kind of contradiction to our description of her majesty, as a person whose society was dull, whose demeanour was stiff, and whose soul was narrow. The rather we seem to stand confirmed by the defence. But he denies her to have been unamiable; first because she was cour-

teous, and obliging to those who attended her, and "who often expressed surprise that her manners were so good as to cause one to forget that her figure was otherwise than graceful." We said nothing against her being courteous in demeanour; but a person may be very courteous, and very disagreeable, and very unamiable. He denies the stiffness of her demeanour, but says she adhered strictly to etiquette, and "checked the approach to any thing like familiarity of manners, or too great freedom of conversation." She was kind and considerate to her attendants and her servants; and in this excellent quality we venture to say she resembled the whole of the royal family. They are all exemplary in this particular, without any exception. That the court was quite as dull as we had painted it, our author seems very frankly to admit; and he adds, that though some relaxation of the uniform routine would "have been agreeable and reasonable, this uniformity had become habitually imperative, a sort of second nature."

He now comes to more essential matter; and he peremptorily denies that she was spiteful, or unforgiving, or designing, or prone to mingle in intrigue, or of boundless pride; and will only allow her to have been "of a suspicious nature, not readily giving her confidence, or recalling it when once, after due experience, she had conferred it." Now this is not sufficiently specific by a very great deal. When we alluded to her conduct, it was with reference to well-known passages of her own, and her son's history. She took his father's part against him till he became regent; and then she took his part against his wife. That she was a person "who abstained from all political intrigue and from all interference with the public measures," our author mentions as "a circumstance to her majesty's credit, and which on that account we omitted." Now, will he permit us to give one other reason? We omitted it as we did the statement that she never ordered her carriage and went down to command the troops, or to make royal speeches to both Houses of Parliament. What! The wife of George III., who being in love with a most beautiful woman, was, against his will, hustled into doing the

only act of his life he ever did against that will,—namely, marrying her at an hour's notice,—this wife, or any wife of George III., intrigue and interfere with public measures or in any official arrangements! Why George III. took good care of that. Had he caught her at any such tricks, he would probably have sent her off to Hanover, if he did not treat her as his great-grandfather had done his queen, for intrigues of another description.* But there was, it seems, one exception. When? As might be expected, when George III. could not interfere. Our author admits that in 1789 “she departed from her rule”—of not intriguing and meddling with official arrangements. Why to be sure she did; and it was precisely that very departure, or rather that act of intriguing, on the only occasion when she had the power to intrigue, which we had in our eye. Mark the expression we cautiously used. “She *could* mingle in the intrigues of a court as well as feel its malignities.” Our author's defence of her conduct in 1788–9 is, that she had a personal interest in the matter; “but,” says he, “she may be said to have been personally concerned and deeply interested in the issue.” Who ever does “mingle in the intrigues of a court” for any other reason?

Nothing, however, can be more unsatisfactory than the defence made against our principal charge,—that of joining her son in the disgraceful persecution of his wife, her niece and daughter-in-law, whom her husband had ever as fondly cherished as he had sternly frowned upon her oppressor. When the facts are notorious, and when they were plainly and precisely stated by us, what is the use of such vague defences as this? “The queen never was the tool or the slave of the prince, nor was it in her nature to become that of any one, under any circumstances.” He had in the very same paragraph told us, that on the king's account she had “been led to cling to him in the differences between his majesty and

* That is, he built her into the wall, where her body was afterwards found in the form of a skeleton; but probably she was put to death before being immured.

the prince, though she was partial to his royal highness;" and that "his visits to her at Windsor Castle were embarrassing to her on account of the king's disinclination to encourage them." Here, by the way, we have, perhaps inadvertently, certainly candidly, a distinct enough admission of the king's hatred of his son,—for this is the very picture of a tyrannical husband and unnatural father, refusing a fond mother the solace of her son's company even for an occasional visit. But at least it negatives the notion of the queen's nature precluding all subserviency "to any one." That, however, is not all. We again refer our author back to the fact as we stated it in plain terms, in the Paper* which he has undertaken to answer; and we ask, has he the means of contradicting what every man who was alive in 1814 knows to be true? If true, all we said against this queen, and more, is proved. She knew the tender love of her husband for their daughter-in-law; and farther, she knew that were he in his senses, she durst no more have held a court and excluded the Princess of Wales, than she durst have ordered the Channel Fleet to sail into Brest harbour; she knew that the king, her husband, who had ever treated her with the fondest affection, and whose whole married life was a pattern of conjugal fidelity, abhorred nothing in his son's private conduct so much as the maltreatment of the princess; she knew that this aged monarch was suffering under a severe visitation of Providence, likely to terminate only with his days; and she therefore takes the opportunity of joining the son against father, husband, and wife; having always before joined the king against the son, when the son was weak and the king strong; and she gratified this son's unnatural hatred of the wife whom he had so scandalously ill-used, by refusing to receive her at a court which she held upon a great public occasion, that rendered the outrage a thousand times the more galling.† We think the mob itself, of whose intellectual qualities our author has so poor an opinion,

* See Edin. Rev. page 20, 21. vol. lxvii. April, 1838.

† The foreign sovereigns, being in London after the termination of the war.

formed a far more accurate estimate of her majesty than he has himself done. Their indignation broke through all bounds of decorum; and in this, especially towards an elderly lady, we are as far from vindicating them as our author; but we heartily partake in the feelings which prompted them, although we reprobate the outrage in which those feelings ended.

One charge adverted to by us, but very commonly brought against this princess, is positively denied by our author; and much more specifically, and therefore more successfully than any of the other matters of which he treats;—we allude to parsimony and avarice. We had supposed the universally circulated statements of presents and contributions, diamonds and ornaments, and refusals to pay writing-masters' accounts, and defending actions and pleading the statute of limitations, till the matter was referred to arbitration, had been substantially well founded. It is very possible that they may not; and in that case injustice has been done to Queen Charlotte's memory; but it has been done by the world at large full as much as by us. He positively states that no charge can be more groundless; admitting candidly that it does not originate with us. "I speak," he says, "from knowledge of fact, her majesty's receipts and disbursements having for some years, passed through my hands. * Avarice and parsimony, combined with a large income enjoyed during many years, would naturally produce hoards of treasure and accumulation of property; but it was shown by her majesty's executors, Lord Arden and myself, that there had been scarcely any saving. It was also stated that her majesty's private bounties and charities had been extensive; care was taken by us that justice should be done to her majesty's memory in this respect, and that the public should be undeceived." We never had heard of the vindication; and of the charities, here affirmed to be so numerous, we also never had heard. But it is just that the important testimony of our author should be here recorded in refutation of the charge. It is to be observed that the existence of the charities is matter of supposition only. But the fact of no money having been accumulated is

very material. We assume also, though it is not stated, that none was ever sent over to Germany.

We now have little more to do; for the main attack in our Paper was directed against George IV., all the remarks on his parents being compressed within the limits of less than two pages out of eighty. Our author finds an extenuation of the son's conduct somewhat harder work than the defence of the parents. Accordingly, there is not even an attempt at denial,—even the most faint denial,—of the charges which we had preferred, and which, indeed, stand recorded in the recent pages of our history.

We must remark, however, that our author is not justified in saying that we did not allow him “so much as the shade of one redeeming feature.”* Now, on the contrary, we deliberately think that our defence, or rather palliation, is far more effectual than Sir Herbert Taylor's. We said in terms that George IV. was “originally not deficient in any of the good, nor in almost any of the great qualities of human character,”—that his “temper was naturally neither sour nor revengeful,”—“that his abilities were far above mediocrity”—“that he was quick, lively, gifted with a retentive memory, and even a ready wit.” Why, how much allowance would our author have of “redeeming qualities” for any prince? Yet that was not all: “he was endowed with an exquisite ear for music, and a justness of eye that fitted him to attain refined taste in the arts; possessed of a nice sense of the ludicrous,” and much more, ending in a fine person, and manners suited to his exalted station—two praises which we knew him well

* So he says, in p. 27, though he afterwards refers to us as allowing a good many of the things we here cite. How does he get rid of this? By saying that we seem to concede them in order to add to the deformity of the character! Be it so; still it is a complete refutation of his former assertion, that no *redeeming quality* was allowed by us. Sir H. Taylor mentions a circumstance wholly new to us, and which we think must be erroneously given. He says, (p. 30,) that George IV.'s “mind was usefully applied to the cultivation of literature and science at late periods of his life.” Really, he should have fortified this somewhat novel statement by mentioning what branches of literature he cultivated. Why not state the books of science which he read.

enough to be quite sure he would himself have most highly valued. Then all, or nearly all, his faults are ascribed to his station, and the corrupting influence which it exerts upon its royal victims. We must cite the passage, because it at once relieves us from all suspicion of partiality, and is in fact a much better defence than Sir H. Taylor has made for his client.

“Let it not be supposed, that in sketching the characters of George IV. and his queen, we have yielded to the feelings of party violence, and while we excused the errors of the injured party, exaggerated the offences of the wrong-doer. The portrait which we have painted of him is undoubtedly one of the darkest shade, and most repulsive form. But the faults which gross injustice alone could pass over without severe reprobation, we have ascribed to their true cause,—the corrupting influence of a courtly education, and habits of unbounded self-indulgence upon a nature originally good; and although the sacred rules of morality forbid us to exonerate from censure even the admitted victim of circumstances so unfriendly to virtue, charity, as well as candour, permits us to add, that those circumstances should bear a far larger share of the reprehension than the individual, who may well claim our pity, while he incurs our censure.”*

We do not of course repeat our catalogue in detail of the defects which blacken this character. But what has our author, who vainly complains of our severity, to urge against our statement? He enters into a long and really unnecessary vindication of the prince for his alarm at the dangers to which the French Revolution exposed his order; and gives his own opinion that France has gained but little by that great event—an opinion which no man can hold for a moment, who reads such works as Paul Courier's, or Mirabeau's *Memoirs*,—the one showing the manners of the peasantry, the other the manners and slavery of the upper ranks under the old régime. All this, however, is really beside the question.

* See p. 100.

Our author admits "much useless and extravagant expenditure;" but it was coupled, he says, with "munificent patronage of literature, science, and the arts." If so, he has only to show what order the Prince of Wales ever gave for a marble, or a picture, or for the aid of a man of science or letters, during the whole period of his extravagance, and while his debts were accumulating for the people to pay. That he gave many sums in relief of persons applying to him, our author asserts from his own knowledge; and that his charities had no reference to party connexion, is an addition which does the prince credit. We presume this statement refers to his regency. "With all his failings, he was," it seems, "kind-hearted; disposed to do justice to faithful servants, and had the gift beyond most men of attaching them to his person." Now, this is literally all. No other defence or palliation whatever is urged for a prince against whom such heavy charges had been brought. All that we alleged respecting his seduction of Mrs. Fitzherbert with the false semblance of a marriage which he knew to be illegal and void—of his running the imminent risk of forfeiting his crown by that act; nay, of his having actually incurred the forfeiture, according to some of the soundest lawyers in the country—all that we stated of his denying, through his political friends in parliament, the existence of any marriage—of his afterwards marrying his cousin in order to have his debts paid and his income increased—of his living in open adultery with others in the same house in which his bride lived—of his joining with those persons in every insult that could be put upon a woman—of his turning her soon after out of doors—of his keeping spies on her conduct—of his tormenting her with a secret trial behind her back—of his depriving her of her only child's society, and so treating her as to drive her abroad—of his then again hiring spies to blast her character—forcing his ministers to bring forward a bill of Pains and Penalties—compelling them to persist in it till the foul mass of perjured evidence fermented and exploded, and the conspiracy perished in the rankness of the soil it was hatched in—of his afterwards refusing

the common benefits of acquittal to her whom he had vainly tried to destroy by trial—of his unmanly treatment of that persecuted woman, continued till it terminated her days—and of his finally holding his rejoicings in Ireland whilst her insulted corpse was hurried, at the speed of four horses, through England, towards the grave in her native country, where alone she was fated ever to know rest since she had been drawn from thence, a victim to the conspiracy of princely avarice and profligacy—all this we stated distinctly, and all this our author, in his capacity of defender of the royal family, passes over without one word of remark, or denial, or extenuation. Then, we have a right to ask why he thinks himself entitled to charge us with having shown “party hostility and soreness” in our description of a character which he must himself be taken to admit was marked by such shades as these? When such outrages upon all honourable principle, all manly feeling, all the maxims of common fairness and justice, are to be recorded by the historian, surely it is strange to suppose that party or personal feeling can be the cause of *any* degree of indignant reprobation which he may express. It is the eternal and immutable principles of truth and right which alone are required to stigmatize such detestable and such despicable conduct as it deserves. We have resorted to the charges here, and not unnecessarily. We do so to remind our author, and our readers, that they are all unanswered, nay, all undenied. We hold them up once more in the face of the country, that no courtly parasite may presume to go about whispering that Sir Herbert Taylor has refuted the *Edinburgh Review*; and to prove, that he has only attempted to answer some of the things said by us of the two Parents; without even a formal denial, or mere plea of not guilty, to any one of the far heavier accusations explicitly brought against the Son. We also hold up this deformed portrait as a warning to princes and princesses how they venture either to violate the public duty of their station, or those private duties which the pre-eminence of their rank, far from dispensing them from discharging, only imposes tenfold obligations to perform—

and in order to remind them that the day must come to them all when the tongue of the flatterer is still, and the ear of the world can no longer be abused by courtly defences, and the voice of the people in scorn of princely baseness can no more be stifled—the day of stern justice to all who betray the imperative duties of their exalted station.

We shall now continue our sketches of the Statesmen and Orators that flourished in the times of the last two Georges, upon whose characters we have been commenting.

Of Mr. Burke's genius as a writer and an orator, we have on a former occasion spoken at great, though not needless length;* and it would not have been necessary again to take up the subject, but for a sketch of a very different kind lately drawn by another hand, from which a more accurate resemblance might have been expected. That Mr. Burke, with extraordinary powers of mind, cultivated to a wonderful degree, was a person of eccentric nature; that he was one mixture of incongruous extremes; that his opinions were always found to be on the outermost verge of those which could be held upon any question; that he was wholly wild and impracticable in his views; that he knew not what moderation or modification was in any doctrine which he advanced; but was utterly extravagant in what ever judgment he formed, and whatever sentiment he expressed;—such was the representation to which we have alluded, and which, considering the distinguished quarter from which it proceeded, seems to justify some farther remark. We are no followers of Mr. Burke's political principles, and are no indiscriminate admirers of his course as a statesman;—the capacity in which he the least shone, especially during the few latter and broken years of his illustrious, checkered, and careworn life. But with the exception of his writings upon

* See Edin. Rev. No. XCII. for October, 1827.

the French Revolution—an exception itself to be qualified and restricted—it would be difficult to find any statesman of any age, whose opinions were more habitually marked by moderation; by a constant regard to the results of actual experience, as well as the dictates of an enlarged reason; by a fixed determination always to be practical, at the time he was giving scope to the most extensive general views; by a cautious and prudent abstinence from all extremes, and especially from those towards which the general complexion of his political principles tending, he felt the more necessity for being on his guard against the seduction. This was the distinguishing feature of his policy through life. A brilliant fancy and rich learning did not more characterize his discourse, than this moderation did his counsels. Imagination did not more inspire, or deep reflection inform his eloquence, than a wise spirit of compromise between theory and practice,—between all opposing extremes,—governed his choice of measures. This was by the extremes of both parties, but more especially of his own, greatly complained of; they could not always comprehend it, and they could never relish it; because their own understanding and information reached it not; and the selfish views of their meaner nature were thwarted by it. In his speeches, by the length at which he dwelt on topics, and the vehemence of his expressions, he was often deficient in judgment. But in the formation of his opinions, no such defect could be perceived; he well and warily propounded all practical considerations; and although he viewed many subjects in different lights at the earlier and the later periods of his time, and is thus often quoted for opposite purposes by reasoners on different sides of the great political controversy, he himself never indulged in wild or thoughtless extremes. He brought this spirit of moderation into public affairs with him; and if we except the very end of his life, when he had ceased to live much in public, it stuck by him to the last. “I pitched my whiggism low,” said he, “that I might keep by it.” With his own followers his influence was supreme; and over such men as Dr. Lawrence, Mr. W. Elliott, and the late Lord

Minto, to say nothing of the Ellises, the Freres, and the Cannings, no man of immoderate and extreme opinions ever could have retained this sway. Mr. Wilberforce compares their deference for him with the treatment of Ahitophél. "It was as if one went to inquire of the oracle of the Lord."* Hear again the words of one who knew him well, for he had studied him much, and had been engaged in strenuous controversy against him. Speaking of the effects produced by his strong opinions respecting French affairs, Sir James Mackintosh, as justly, as profoundly observed to Mr. Horner—"So great is the effect of a single inconsistency with the whole course of a long and wise political life, that the *greatest philosopher in practice* whom the world ever saw, passes with the superficial vulgar for a hot-brained enthusiast." Sir James Mackintosh never dreamt that all the temperate wisdom of the orations upon American affairs—all the profound and practical discretion which breathes over each page of the discussion upon "Public Discontents"—all the truly enlarged principles of retrenchment, but tempered with the soundest and most rational views of each proposition's bearing upon the whole frame of our complicated constitution, which has made the celebrated speech upon "Economical Reform" the manual of every moderate and constitutional reformer—all the careful regard for facts, as well as abstract principles, the nice weighing of opposite arguments, the acute perception of practical consequences, which presided over his whole opinions upon commercial policy, especially on the questions connected with Scarcity and the Corn Laws—all the mingled firmness, humanity, soundness of practical judgment, and enlargement of speculative views, which governed his opinions upon the execution of the Criminal Law—all the spirit of reform and toleration, tempered with cautious circumspection of surrounding connexions, and provident foresight of possible consequences which marked and moved his wise and liberal advice upon the affairs of the Irish Hierarchy—that all would have been forgotten

* Life of Wilberforce, vol. ii. p. 211.

in the perusal of a few violent invectives, or exaggerated sentiments, called forth by the horrors of the French revolution;—which as his unrivalled sagacity had foreseen them, when the rest of his party, intoxicated with the victory over despotism, could not even look towards any consequences at all; so he not very unnaturally regarded as the end and consummation of that mighty event,—mistaking the turbulence by which the tempest and the flood were to clear the stream, for the perennial defilement of its waters.

Nor must it after all be set down to the account of a heated imagination, and an unsound judgment, that even upon the French revolution he betrayed so much violence in his language, and carried his opinions to a length which all men now deem extravagant; or that he at one time was so mislead by the appearances of the hour as to dread the effacing of France from the map of Europe. We are now filling the safe and easy chair of him who judges after the event, and appeals to things as certainly known, which the veil of futurity concealed from them that went before. Every one must allow that the change which shook France to her centre, and fixed the gaze of mankind, was an event of prodigious magnitude; and that he who was called to form an opinion upon its import, and to foretell its consequences, and to shape his councils upon the conduct to be pursued regarding it, was placed in circumstances wholly new; and had to grope his way without any light whatever from the experience of past times. Mr. Burke could only see mischief in it, view it on whatever side, or from whatever point he would; and he regarded the consequences as pregnant with danger to all other countries, as well as to the one which he saw laid waste, or about to be devastated by its progress. That for a time he saw right, no one now can affect to deny. When all else in this country could foresee nothing but good to France, from the great improvement so suddenly wrought in her institutions, he plainly told them that what they were pleased with viewing as the lambent flame of a firework, was the glare of a volcanic explosion which would cover France and Europe with

the ruins of all their institutions, and fill the air with Cimmerian darkness, through the confusion of which neither the useful light of day, nor the cheering prospect of heaven could be descried. The suddenness of the improvement which delighted all else, to his sagacious and far-sighted eye, aided, doubtless, by the reflecting glass of past experience, and strengthened by the wisdom of other days in which it had been steeped, presented the very cause of distrust, and foreboding, and alarm. It was *because* his habit of mind was cautious and calculating—not easily led away by a fair outside, not apt to run into extremes, given to sober reflection, and fond of correcting, by practical views, and by the lessons of actual observation, the plausible suggestions of theory—that he beheld, with doubt and apprehension, governments pulled down and set up in a day—constitutions, the slow work of centuries, taken to pieces and re-constructed like an eight-day clock. He is not without materials, were he to retort the charge of easily running into extremes, and knowing not where to stop, upon those who were instantly fascinated with the work of 1789, and could not look forward to the consequences of letting loose four-and-twenty millions of people, from the control under which ages of submission to arbitrary rule, and total disuse of civil rights had kept them. *They* are assuredly without the means of demonstrating *his* want of reflection and foresight. For nearly the whole period during which he survived the commencement of the revolution—for five of those seven years—all his predictions, save one momentary expression, had been more than fulfilled; anarchy and bloodshed had borne sway in France; conquest and convulsion had desolated Europe; and even when he closed his eyes upon earthly prospects, he left this portentous matter “with fear of change perplexing monarchs.” The providence of mortals is not often able to penetrate so far as this into futurity. Nor can he whose mind was filled with such well-grounded alarms be justly impeached of violence, and held up as unsoundly given to extremes of opinion, if he should betray an invincible repugnance to sudden revolutions in the system of policy by which

nations are governed, and an earnest desire to see the restoration of the old state of things in France, as the harbinger of repose for the rest of the world.

That Mr. Burke did, however, err, and err widely in the estimate which he formed of the merits of a restored government, no one can now doubt. His mistake was in comparing the old *régime* with the anarchy of the revolution; to which not only the monarchy of France but the despotism of Turkey was preferable. He never could get rid of the belief that because the change had been effected with a violence which produced, and inevitably produced the consequences foreseen by himself, and by him alone, therefore the tree so planted must for ever prove incapable of bearing good fruit. He forgot that after the violence, in its nature temporary, should subside, it might be both quite impossible to restore the old monarchy, and very possible to form a new, and orderly, and profitable government upon the ruins of the republic. Above all, he had seen so much present mischief wrought to France during the convulsive struggle which was not over before his death, that he could not persuade himself of any possible good arising to her from the mighty change she had undergone. All this we now see clearly enough; having survived Mr. Burke forty years, and witnessed events which the hardiest dealers in prophecies assuredly could never have ventured to foretell. But we who were so blind to the early consequences of the revolution, and who really did suffer ourselves to be carried away by extreme opinions, deaf to all Mr. Burke's warnings—we surely have little right to charge him with blind violence, unreflecting devotion to his fancy, and a disposition to run into extremes. At one time they who opposed his views were by many, perhaps by the majority of men, accused of this propensity. After the events in France had begun to affright the people in this country—when Mr. Burke's opinions were found to have been well-grounded, the friends of liberty would not give up their fond belief that all must soon come right. At that time we find Dean Milner writing to Mr. Wilberforce from Cambridge, that “Mr. Fox's old

friends there all gave him up, and most of them said he was mad."*

The glory of this great man's career, however, was the American war, during which he led the opposition in the House of Commons; until, having formed a successor still more renowned than himself, he was succeeded rather than superseded in the command of that illustrious and victorious band of the champions of freedom. This disciple, as he was proud to acknowledge himself, was Charles James Fox, one of the greatest statesmen, and if not the greatest orator, certainly the most accomplished debater, that ever appeared upon the theatre of public affairs in any age of the world. To the profuse, the various learning of his master—to his exuberant fancy, to his profound and mature philosophy, he had no pretensions. His knowledge was confined to the ordinary accomplishments of an English education:—intimate acquaintance with the classics; the exquisite taste which that familiarity bestows; and a sufficient knowledge of history. Those stores he afterwards increased rather than diminished; for he continued to delight in classical reading; and added a minute and profound knowledge of modern languages, with a deep and accurate study of our own history, and the history of other modern states; inso-much, that it may be questioned, if any politician in any age ever knew so thoroughly the various interests, and the exact position of all the countries with which his own had dealings to conduct, or relations to maintain. Beyond these solid foundations of oratory, and ample stores of political information, his range did not extend. Of natural science, of metaphysical philosophy, of poli-

* *Life of Wilberforce*, II. p. 3.—This was written early in the year 1793, when almost all men thought Mr. Burke both moderate and right. "There is scarce one of his (Mr. Fox's) old friends here at Cambridge who is not disposed to give him up, and most say he is mad. I think of him much as I always did; I still doubt whether he has had principles, but I think it pretty plain he has none; and I suppose he is ready for whatever turns up." See, too, Lord Wellesley's justly celebrated speech, two years later, on French affairs. It is republished in Mr. Martin's edition of that great statesman's despatches.

ical economy, he had not even the rudiments; and he was apt to treat those matters with the neglect, if not the contempt, which ignorance can rather account for than excuse. He had come far too early into public life to be well-grounded in a statesman's philosophy—like his great rival, and indeed like most aristocratic politicians, who were described as “rocked and dandled into legislators” by one,* himself exempt from this defective education—and his becoming a warm partisan at the same early age, also laid the foundation of another defect, the making party principle the only rule of conduct, and viewing every truth of political science through this distorting and discolouring medium. But if such were the defects of his education, the mighty powers of his nature often overcame them—always threw them into the shade. A preternatural quickness of apprehension, which enabled him to see at a glance what cost other minds the labour of an investigation, made all attainments of an ordinary kind so easy, that it perhaps disinclined him to those which, not even his acuteness and strength of mind, could master without the pain of study. But he was sure as well as quick: and where the heat of passion or the prejudice of party, or certain little peculiarities of a personal kind—certain mental idiosyncracies in which he indulged, and which produced capricious fancies or crotchets—left his faculties unclouded and unstunted, no man's judgement was more sound, or could more safely be trusted. Then, his feelings were warm and kindly; his temper was sweet though vehement;—like that of all the Fox family, his nature was generous, open, manly; above every thing like dissimulation or duplicity; governed by the impulses of a great and benevolent soul. This virtue, so much beyond all intellectual graces, yet bestowed its accustomed influence upon the faculties of his understanding, and gave them a reach of enlargement to which meaner natures are ever strangers. It was not more certain that such a mind as his should be friendly to religious toleration, eager for the assertion of civil liberty, the

* Namely, Mr. Burke.

uncompromising enemy of craft and cruelty in all their forms—from the corruption of the Treasury and the severity of the penal code, up to the oppression of American colonies and the African slave traffic—than that it should be enlarged and strengthened, made powerful in its grasp, and consistent in its purpose, by the same admirable and amiable qualities which bent it always towards the right pursuit.

The great intellectual gifts of Mr. Fox's mind, the robust structure of his faculties, naturally governed his oratory, made him singularly affect argument, and led him to a close grappling with every subject,—despising all flights of imagination, and shunning every thing collateral or discursive. This turn of mind, too, made him always careless of ornament, often negligent of accurate diction. There never was a greater mistake, as we lately had occasion to remark,* than the fancying a close resemblance between his eloquence and that of Demosthenes; although an excellent judge (Sir James Mackintosh) fell into it, when he pronounced him "the most Demosthenean speaker since Demosthenes." That he resembled his immortal predecessor in despising all useless ornament, and all declamation for declamation's sake, is true enough; but it applies to every good speaker as well as to those two signal ornaments of ancient and modern rhetoric. That he resembled him in keeping more close to the subject in hand, than many good, and even great speakers have often done, may also be affirmed; yet this is far too vague and remote a likeness to justify the proposition in question; and it is only a difference in degree, and not a specific distinction between him and others. That his eloquence was fervid, rapid, copious,—carrying along with it the minds of the audience, nor suffering them to dwell upon the speaker or the speech, but engrossing their whole attention to the question, is equally certain; and is the only resemblance which the comparison affords. But then the points of difference are as numerous as they are important, and

* See Article on Lord Chatham in the *Edinburgh Review*, No 136, July, 1838.

they strike indeed upon the most cursory glance. The one was full of repetitions, recurring again and again to the same topic, nay, to the same view of it, till he made his impression complete; the other never came back upon a ground which he had utterly wasted and withered up by the tide of fire he had rolled along it. The one dwelt at length, and with many words on his topics; the other performed the whole at a blow, sometimes with a word, always with the smallest number of words possible. The one frequently was digressive, even narrative and copious in illustration; in the other no deviation from his course was ever to be perceived; no disporting on the borders of his way, more than any lingering over it; but carried rapidly forward, and without swerving to the right or to the left, like the engines flying along a rail way, and like them driving every thing off out of sight that obstructed his resistless course. In diction, as well as in thought, the contrast was as remarkable. It is singular that any one should have thought of likening Mr. Fox to the orator of whom the great Roman critic, comparing him with Cicero, has said so well and so judiciously—*In illo plus curæ, in hoc plus naturæ*. The Greek was of all speakers, the one who most carefully prepared each sentence; showing himself as sedulous in the colligation of his words as in the selection. His composition, accordingly, is a model of the most artificial workmanship; yet of an art so happy in its results that itself is wholly concealed. The Englishman was negligent, careless, slovenly beyond most speakers; even his most brilliant passages were the inspirations of the moment; and he frequently spoke for half an hour at a time, sometimes delivered whole speeches, without being fluent for five minutes, or, excepting in a few sound and sensible remarks which were interspersed, rewarding the hearer with a single redeeming passage. Indeed, to the last, he never possessed, unless when much animated, any fluency; and probably despised it, as he well might, if he only regarded its effects in making men neglect more essential qualities,—when the curse of being *fluent speakers*, and nothing else, has fallen on them and

on their audience. Nevertheless, that fluency—the being able easily to express his thoughts in correct words—is as essential to a speaker as drawing to a painter. This we cannot doubt, any more than we can refuse our assent to the proposition, that though merely giving pleasure is no part of an orator's duty, yet he has no vocation to give his audience pain;—which any one must feel who listens to a speaker delivering himself with difficulty and hesitation. The practice of composition seems never to have been familiar to Mr. Fox. His speeches show this; perhaps his writings still more so; because there, the animation of the momentary excitement which often carried him on in speaking had little or no play. One of his worst speeches, if not his worst, is that upon Francis, Duke of Bedford; and it is known to be almost the only one he ever much prepared, and the only one he ever corrected for the press. His "History" too, shows the same want of expertness in composition. The style is pure and correct; but cold and lifeless; it is even somewhat abrupt and discontinuous; so little does it flow naturally or with ease. Yet, when writing letters without any effort, no one expressed himself more happily or with more graceful facility; and in conversation, of which he only partook when the society was small and intimate, he was a model of every excellence, whether solid or gay, plain or refined—full of information, witty and playful betimes, never ill natured for a moment;—above all, never afraid of an argument, as so many eminent men are wont to be; but on the contrary, courting discussion on all subjects, perhaps without much regard to their relative importance; as if reasoning were his natural element, in which his great faculties moved the more freely. An admirable judge, but himself addicted to reasoning upon general principles, the late Mr. Dumont, used to express his surprise at the love of minute discussion, or argumentation upon trifling subjects, which this great man often showed. But the cause was clear; argument he must have; and, as his studies, except upon historical and classical

points, had been extremely confined, when matters of a political or critical cast were not on the carpet, he took whatever ordinary matter came uppermost, and made it the subject of discussion. To this circumstance may be added his playful good-nature; which partook, as Mr. Gibbon observed, of the simplicity of a child;—making him little fastidious and easily interested and amused.

Having premised all these qualifications, we must now add, that Mr. Fox's eloquence was of a kind which, to comprehend, you must have heard himself. When he got fairly into his subject, was heartily warmed with it, he poured forth words and periods of fire that smote you, and deprived you of all power to reflect and rescue yourself, while he went on to seize the faculties of the listener, and carry them captive along with him whithersoever he pleased to rush. It is ridiculous to doubt that he was a far closer reasoner, a much more argumentative speaker than Demosthenes; as much more so as Demosthenes would perhaps have been than Fox had he lived in our times, and had to address an English House of Commons. For it is the kindred mistake of those who fancy that the two were like each other, to imagine that the Grecian's orations are long chains of ratiocination, like Sir William Grant's arguments, or Euclid's Demonstrations. They are close to the point; they are full of impressive allusions; they abound in expositions of the adversary's inconsistency; they are loaded with bitter invective; they never lose sight of the subject; and they never quit hold of the hearer by the striking appeals they make to his strongest feelings and his favourite recollections: to the heart, or to the quick and immediate sense of inconsistency, they are always addressed, and find their way thither by the shortest and surest road; but to the head, to the calm and sober judgment, as pieces of argumentation, they assuredly are not addressed. But Mr. Fox, as he went along, and exposed absurdity, and made inconsistent arguments clash, and laid bare shuffling, or hypocrisy, and showered down upon meanness, or upon cruelty, or upon oppression, a pitiless storm of the most fierce

invective, was ever forging also the long, and compacted, and massive chain of pure demonstration.

Ἐν δ' ἔβητ' ἀκμιβέτω μεγάλην ἀκμονά. κοπτοῖ δὲ δεσμούς
'Αρρηκτοὺς, ἀλυτοὺς, ὥς ἐμπέδον αὐτὴ μένοισιν.

(Od. ε.)

There was no weapon of argument which this great orator more happily or more frequently wielded than wit,—the wit which exposes to ridicule the absurdity or inconsistency of an adverse argument. It has been said of him, we believe, by Mr. Frere,* that he was the wittiest speaker of his times; and they were the times of Sheridan and of Windham. This was Mr. Canning's opinion, and it was also Mr. Pitt's. There was nothing more awful in Mr. Pitt's sarcasm, nothing so vexatious in Mr. Canning's light and galling raillery. as the battering and piercing wit, with which Mr. Fox so often interrupted, but always supported, the heavy artillery of his argumentative declamation.

"Nonne fuit satius, tristes Amaryllidis iras,
Atque superba pati fastidia? Nonne, Menalcan?"

In debate, he had that ready discernment of an adversary's weakness, and the advantage to be taken of it. which is, in the war of words, that the *coup d'œil* of a practised general is in the field. He was ever best in reply; his opening speeches were almost always unsuccessful; the one in 1805 upon the Catholic Question was a great exception; and the previous meditation upon it, after having heard Lord Grenville's able opening of the same question in the House of Lords, gave him much anxiety: he was exceedingly *nervous*, to use the common expression. It was a noble performance, instinct with sound principle; full of broad and striking views of policy; abounding in magnanimous appeals to justice; and bold assertions of right; in one passage touching and pathetic,—the description of a catholic soldier's feelings on reviewing some field where he had

* See *Quarterly Review*, for October, 1810.

shared the dangers of the fight, yet repined to think that he could never taste the glories of command. His greatest speeches were those in 1791 on the Russian armament, on parliamentary reform, in 1797, and on the renewal of the war, in 1803. The last he himself preferred to all the others; and it had the disadvantage, if it be not, however, in another sense, the advantage,* of coming after the finest speech, excepting that on the slave trade, ever delivered by his great antagonist. But there are passages in the earlier speeches,—particularly the fierce attack upon Lord Auckland, in the Russian speech,—and the instructive summary of our failings and our misgovernment in the reform speech, which it would be hard to match even in the speech of 1803. But for the inferiority of the subject, the speech upon the Westminster Scrutiny, in 1784, might perhaps be justly placed at the head of them all. The surpassing interest of the question to the speaker himself—the thorough knowledge of all its details by his audience, which made it sufficient to allude to matters and not to state them†—the undeniably strong grounds of attack which he had against his adversary—all conspired to make this great oration as animated and energetic throughout, as it is perfectly felicitous both in the choice of topics and the handling of them. A fortunate cry of “*order*,” which he early raised in the very exordium, by affirming that “far from expecting any indulgence, he could scarcely hope for bare justice from the House,” gave him occasion for dwelling on this topic, and pressing it home with additional illustration; till the redoubled blows and repeated bursts of extemporaneous declamation almost overpowered the audience while they wholly bore down all farther interruption. A similar effect is said to have been produced by Mr.

* To a great speaker, it is always an advantage to follow a powerful adversary. The audience is prepared for attention, nay, even feel a craving for some answer.

† This is one main cause of the conciseness and rapidity of the Greek orations; they were all on a few simple topics thoroughly known to the whole audience. Much of their difficulty comes also from this source.

(now Lord Plunkett,) in the Irish House of Commons, upon some one calling out to take down his words.—“Stop,” said this consummate orator, “and you shall have something more to take down;” and then followed in a torrent, the most vehement and indignant description of the wrongs which his country had sustained, and had still to endure.

In most of the external qualities of oratory, Mr. Fox was certainly deficient, being of an unwieldy person, without any grace of action, with a voice of little compass, and which, when pressed in the vehemence of his speech, became shrill almost to a cry or squeak; yet all this was absolutely forgotten in the moment when the torrent began to pour. Some of the under tones of his voice were peculiarly sweet; and there was even in the shrill and piercing sounds which he uttered when at the more exalted pitch, a power that thrilled the heart of the hearer. His pronunciation of our language was singularly beautiful, and his use of it pure and chaste to severity. As he rejected, from the correctness of his taste, all vicious ornaments, and was most sparing, indeed, in the use of figures at all; so in his choice of words, he justly shunned foreign idiom, or words borrowed, whether from the ancient or modern languages: and affected the pure Saxon tongue, the resources of which, are unknown to so many who use it, both in writing and in speaking.

If from the orator we turn to the man, we shall find much more to blame and to lament, whether his private character be regarded or his public; but for the defects of the former, there are excuses to be offered, almost sufficient to remove the censure, and leave the feeling of regret entire and alone. The foolish indulgence of a father, from whom he inherited his talents certainly, but little principle, put him, while yet a boy, in the possession of pecuniary resources which cannot safely be trusted to more advanced stages of youth; and the dissipated habits of the times drew him, before the age of manhood, into the whirlpool of fashionable excess. In the comparatively correct age in which our lot is cast, it would be almost as unjust to apply our more severe

standard to him and his associates, as it would have been for the Ludlows and Hutchinsons of the seventeenth century, in writing a history of the Roman empire, to denounce the immoralities of Julius Cæsar. Nor let it be forgotten, that the noble heart and sweet disposition of this great man passed unscathed through an ordeal which in almost every other instance, is found to deaden all the kindly and generous affections. A life of gambling, and intrigue, and faction, left the nature of Charles Fox as little tainted with selfishness or falshood, and his heart as little hardened, as if he had lived and died in a farmhouse; or rather as if he had not outlived his childish years.

The historian of a character so attractive, the softer features of which present a rare contrast to the accustomed harshness of political men, is tempted to extend the same indulgence, and ascribe the errors of the statesman to the accidents of his position, or the less lofty tone of principle which distinguished the earlier period of his public life, while his principles of conduct were forming and ripening. The great party, too, which he so long led with matchless personal influence, would gladly catch at such a means of defence; but as the very same measure of justice or of mercy must be meted out to the public conduct of Mr. Pitt, his great rival, there would be little gain to party pride by that sacrifice of principle which could alone lead to such unworthy concessions. It is of most dangerous example, of most corruptive tendency, ever to let the faults of statesmen pass uncensured: or to treat the errors or the crimes which involve the interests of millions with the same indulgence towards human frailty which we may, in the exercise of charity, show towards the more venial transgressions that only hurt one individual; most commonly only the wrong-doer himself. Of Mr. Fox it must be said that whilst his political principles were formed upon the true model of the whig school, and led him, when combined with his position as opposing the government's warlike and oppressive policy, to defend the liberty of America, and the cause of peace, both in that and the French war, yet he constantly modified these principles;

according to his own situation and circumstances as a party chief;—making the ambition of the man and the interest of his followers the governing rule of his conduct. The charge is a grave one; but unhappily the facts fully bear it out. Because Lord Shelburne had gained the king's ear (by an intrigue possibly, but then Lord Shelburne never had pretended to be a follower of Mr. Fox,) the latter formed a coalition with Lord North, whose person and whose policy he had spent his whole life in decrying; whose misgovernment of America had been the cause of nearly destroying the empire; and whose whole principles were the very reverse of his own. The ground taken by this coalition on which to subvert the government of Lord Shelburne and Mr. Pitt, was their having made a peace favourable to England beyond what could have been expected, after the state to which Lord North's mal-administration had reduced her; their having, among other things, given the new American states too large concessions; and their having made inadequate provision for the security and indemnity of the American loyalists. On such grounds they, Mr. Fox and Lord North, succeeded in overturning the ministry, and took their places; which they held for a few months, when the king dismissed them amidst the all but universal joy of the country; men of all ranks, and parties, and sects, joining in one feeling of disgust at the factious propensities in which the unnatural alliance was begotten; and apprehending from it, as Mr. Wilberforce remarked, "a progeny stamped with the features of both parents, the violence of the one party, and the corruption of the other." This grand error raised the tories and Mr. Pitt to the power which, during their long and undisturbed reign, they enjoyed; notwithstanding all the unparalleled difficulties of the times, and in spite of so many failures in all the military enterprises of themselves and of their foreign allies. The original quarrel with Mr. Pitt was an error proceeding from the same evil source. His early but mature talents had been amply displayed; he had already gained an influence in parliament and the country, partly from hereditary, partly from personal qualities, second only to that

of Mr. Fox; his private character was wholly untarnished; his principles were the same with those of the whigs; he had nobly fought with them the battle which destroyed the North administration. Yet no first-rate place could be found to offer him; although Mr. Fox had once and again declared a boundless admiration of his genius, and an unlimited confidence in his character. Lord John Cavendish, of an illustrious whig house by birth, but himself one of the most obscure of mankind, must needs be made Chancellor of the Exchequer. Mr. Pitt was only the son of Lord Chatham, and a man of vast talents, as well as spotless reputation; and he was thus not permitted, without a sacrifice of personal honour, to be the ally of Mr. Fox, in serving their common country. How much misery and mischief might the world have been spared had the Rockingham Ministry preferred Mr. Pitt to Lord John Cavendish, and made the union between him and the Whigs perpetual! We shall presently see that an error almost as great in itself though in its consequences far from being so disastrous, was afterwards committed by Mr. Pitt himself.

The interval between the American and the French wars was passed by Mr. Fox in opposing whatever was proposed by his antagonist; with the single exception of the measures for restoring the Stadtholder's authority in 1787. His hearty admiration of the French Revolution is well known; and it was wholly unqualified by any of the profound and sagacious forebodings of Mr. Burke, excited by the distrust of vast and sudden changes, among a people wholly unprepared; and which seems never afterwards to have been diminished by the undoubted fact of a minority having obtained the sway, and being compelled to make up, with the resources of terror, for their essential want of support among the people at large. The separation of his aristocratic supporters, and the unfortunate war to which it led, left him to struggle for peace, and the constitution, with a small but steady band of noble-minded associates—and their warfare for the rights of the people during the dismal period of alarm which elapsed from 1793 to 1801, when the healing influence of the Addington Govern-

ment was applied to our national wounds, cannot be too highly extolled. The whigs thus regained the confidence of the nation, which their coalition ten years before seemed to have forfeited for ever. The new junction with the Grenville party in 1804 was liable to none of the same objections; it was founded on common principles; and it both honoured its authors and served the state. But when upon Mr. Pitt's death, Mr. Fox again became possessed of power, we find him widely different from the leader of a hopeless, though high-principled opposition to the court of George III. He consented to take office without making any stipulation with the king on behalf of the catholics; a grave neglect which afterwards subverted the whig government; and if it be said that this sacrifice was made to obtain the greater object of peace with France, then it must be added that he was slack indeed in his pursuit of that greater object. He allowed the odious income tax to be nearly doubled, after being driven, one by one, from the taxes proposed; and proposed on the very worst principles ever dreamt of by financiers. He defended the unprincipled arrangement for making the Lord Chief Justice of England a politician, by placing him in the cabinet; he joined as heartily as any one in the fervour of loyal enthusiasm for the Hanoverian possessions of the crown. On one great subject his sense of right, no less than his warm and humane feelings, kept him invariably true to the great principles of justice as well as policy. His attachment was unceasing, and his services invaluable to the abolition of the slave-trade, which his last accession to office certainly accelerated by several years. For this, and for his support of Lord Erskine in his amendment of the law of libel, the lasting gratitude of his country and of mankind is due; and to the memory of so great and so amiable a man it is a tribute which will for ever be cheerfully paid. But to appreciate the gratitude which his country owes him, we must look, not to his ministerial life; we must recur to his truly glorious career as leader of the patriot band which, during the almost hopeless struggle from 1793 to 1801, upheld the cause of afflicted freedom. If to

the genius and the courage of Erskine we may justly be said to owe the escape from proscription, and from arbitrary power, Fox stands next to him as the preserver of that sacred fire of liberty which they saved to blaze forth in happier times. Nor could even Erskine have triumphed as he did had not the party which Fox so nobly led, persevered in maintaining the sacred warfare, and in rallying around them whatever was left of the old English spirit to resist oppression.

The circumstance of his celebrated antagonist's situation were as different from his own as could well be imagined. It was not merely disparity of years by which they were distinguished; all the hereditary prejudices under which the one appeared before the country, were as unfavourable as the prepossessions derived from his father's character and renown were auspicious, to the entrance of the other upon the theatre of public affairs. The grief, indeed, was yet recent which the people had felt for the loss of Lord Chatham's genius, so proudly towering above all party views and personal ties, so entirely devoted to the cause of his principles and patriotism—when his son appeared to take his station, and contest the first rank in the popular affections with the son of him whose policy and parts had been sunk into obscurity by the superior lustre of his adversary's capacity and virtues. But the young statesman's own talents and conduct made good the claim which his birth announced. At an age when others are but entering upon the study of state affairs, and the practice of debating, he came forth a matured politician, a finished orator,—even, as if by inspiration, an accomplished debater. His knowledge, too, was not confined to the study of the classics, though with these he was familiarly conversant;—the more severe pursuits of Cambridge had imparted to him some acquaintance with the stricter sciences, which have had their home upon the banks of the Granta since Newton made them his abode; and with political philosophy he was more familiar than most Englishmen of his age. Having prepared himself, too, for being called to the bar, and both attended on courts of justice and frequented the Western

Circuit he had more knowledge and habits of business than can fall to the share of our young patricians;—the material out of which British statesmen are for the most part fashioned, by an attendance upon debates in parliament, and a study of newspapers in the clubs. Happy had he not too soon been removed into office from the prosecution of studies which his rapid success broke off never to be resumed! For the leading defect of his life, which is seen through all his measures, and which not even his great capacity and intense industry could supply, was an ignorance of the principles upon which large measures are to be framed, and nations to be at once guided and improved. As soon as he entered upon official duties, his time was at the mercy of every one who had a claim to prefer, a grievance to complain of, or a nostrum to propound; nor could the hours of which the day consists suffice at once to give all these their audience; to transact the routine business of his station; to direct or to counteract the intrigues of party; and at the same time, to learn all that his sudden transplanting from the closet to the cabinet, and from the bar to the senate, had of necessity left unlearned. From hence, and from the temptation always afforded in times of difficulty to avoid as much as possible all unnecessary embarrassments, and all risks not forced upon him, arose the peculiarity which marks his story, and marks it in a way not less hurtful to his own renown through after ages, than unfortunate for his country. With more power than any minister had ever possessed—with an opposition which rather was a help than a hindrance to him—during the greater part of his rule—with a friendly court, an obsequious parliament, a confiding people—he held the supreme place in the public councils for twenty years; and excepting the union with Ireland, which was forced upon him by a rebellion, and which was both corruptly and imperfectly carried, so as to produce the smallest possible benefit to either country, he has left not a single measure behind him for which the community, whose destinies he so long swayed, has any reason to respect his memory; while, by want of firmness, he was the cause of an impolicy and extravagance, the effects of

which are yet felt, and will oppress us beyond the life of the youngest person alive.

It is assuredly not to Mr. Pitt's sinking-fund that we now allude, as showing his defective political resources; that scheme, now exploded, after being gradually given up by all adepts in the science of finance, was for many years their favourite; nor can he in this particular be so justly charged, as he well may in all the rest of his measures, with never having gone before his age, and not always being upon a level with the wisdom of his own times. Yet may it be confessed that, his financial administration being the main feature in his official history, all his other plans are allowed to have been failures at the time; and this, the only exception, began to be questioned before his decease, and has long been abandoned.* Neither would we visit harshly the entire change of his opinions upon the great question of reform; albeit the question with which his claims to public favour commenced, and on his support of which his early popularity and power were almost wholly grounded. But we feel the force of the defence urged for his conversion, that the alarms raised in the most reflecting minds by the French Revolution, and its cognate excitement amongst ourselves, justified a reconsideration, and might induce an honest alteration of the opinions originally entertained upon our parliamentary system. That any such considerations could ever justify him in lending himself to the persecution of his former associates in that cause, we wholly deny; and in aid of this denial, we ask, what would have been said of Messrs. Wilberforce, Clarkson, Stephen, Brougham, Smith, and the other abolitionists, had they, on account of some dreadful desolation of our colonies by negro insurrection, suddenly joined in proscribing and persecuting all who, after they themselves had left the cause, should continue to devote their efforts to its promotion? But the main charge against Mr. Pitt is, his having suffered himself to be led away by the alarms of the court, and the zeal of his new allies,

* It was Dr. Price's plan; and he complained that, of the three Schemes propounded by him, Mr. Pitt had selected the worst.

the Burke and Windham party, from the ardent love of peace which he professed, and undoubtedly felt, to the eager support of the war against France, which might well have been avoided had he but stood firm. The deplorable consequences of this change in his conduct are too well known: they are still too sensibly felt. But are the motives of it wholly free from suspicion? *Cui bono?* was the question put by the Roman lawyer when the person really guilty of any act was sought for. A similar question may often be put, without any want of charity, when we are in quest of the motives which prompted a doubtful or suspicious course of action; proved by experience to have been disastrous to the world. That, as the chief of a party, Mr. Pitt was incalculably a gainer by the event which, for awhile, well nigh annihilated the opposition to his ministry, and left that opposition crippled as long as the war lasted, no man can doubt. That independent of the breaking up of the whigs, the war gave their powerful antagonist a constant lever wherewithal to move at will both parliament and people, as long as the sinews of war could be obtained from the resources of the country, is at least as unquestionable a fact.

His conduct of the war betrayed no extent of views, no commanding notions of policy. Any thing more common-place can hardly be imagined. To form one coalition after another in Germany, and subsidize them with millions of free gift, or aid with profuse loans, until all the powers in our pay were defeated in succession, and most of them either destroyed or converted into allies of the enemy—such were all the resources of his diplomatic policy. To shun any effectual conflict with the enemy, while he wasted our military force in petty expeditions—to occupy forts, and capture colonies, which, if France prevailed in Europe, were useless acquisitions, only increasing the amount of the slave trade, and carrying abroad our own capital, and which, if France were beaten in Europe, would all of themselves fall into our hands—such was the whole scheme of his warlike policy. The operations of our navy, which were undertaken as a matter of course, and

would have been performed, and must have led to our brilliant maritime successes, whoever was the minister, or whether there was any minister at all, may be added to the account; but can have little or no influence upon the estimate to be formed of his belligerent administration. When, after a most culpable refusal to treat with Napoleon in 1800, grounded on the puerile hope of the newly gotten consular power being soon overthrown, he found it impossible any longer to continue the ruinous expenditure of the war, he retired, placing his puppet in his office, with whom he quarrelled for refusing to retire when he was bidden. But the ostensible ground of his resignation was the king's bigoted refusal to emancipate the Irish Catholics. Nothing could have more rebounded to his glory than this. But he resumed office in 1804, refused to make any stipulation for those same Catholics, and always opposed those who urged their claims, on the utterly unconstitutional ground of the king's personal prejudices—a ground quite as solid for yielding to that monarch in 1801, as for not urging him in 1804. It was quite as discreditable to him that, on the same occasion, after pressing Mr. Fox upon George III. as an accession of strength necessary for well carrying on the war, he agreed to take office without any such accession; rather than thwart the personal antipathy,—the capricious, the despicable antipathy of that narrow-minded and vindictive prince against the most illustrious of his subjects.*

These are heavy charges; but we fear the worst remains to be urged against the conduct of this eminent person. No man felt more strongly on the subject of

* It is a singular instance of the great effects of trivial circumstances that we can relate the following anecdote. During the co-operation of all parties against Mr. Addington's Government in the spring of 1804, Mr. Pitt and Mr. C. Long were one night passing the door of Brooks Club-house, on their way from the House of Commons, when Mr. Pitt, who had not been there since the coalition of 1784, said he had a great mind to go in and sup. His wary friend said, "I think you had better not" and turned aside the well-disposed intention. When we reflect on the high favour Mr. Pitt then was in with the whigs, and consider the nature of Mr. Fox as well as his own, we can have little doubt of the cordial friendship which such a night would have cemented; and that the union of the two parties would have been complete.

the African slave trade than he; and all who heard him are agreed, that his speeches against it were the finest even of his noble orations. Yet did he continue for eighteen years of his life, suffering every one of his colleagues, nay, of his mere underlings in office, to vote against the question of abolition, if they thought fit—men, the least inconsiderable of whom, durst no more have thwarted him upon any of the more trifling measures of his government, than they durst have thrust their heads into the fire. Even the foreign slave trade, and the traffic which his war policy had troubled by the capture of the enemy's colonies, he suffered to grow and prosper under the fostering influence of British capital; and after letting years and years glide away, and hundreds of thousands be torn from their own country, and carried to perpetual misery in ours, while a stroke of his pen could, at any moment, have stopped it for ever, he only could be brought to issue, a few months before his death, the easy order in council, which at length destroyed the pestilence. This is by far the gravest charge to which Mr. Pitt's memory is exposed.

If from the statesman we turn to the orator, the contrast is indeed marvellous. He is to be placed, without any doubt, in the highest class. With a sparing use of ornament, hardly indulging more in figures, or even in figurative expressions, than the most severe examples of ancient chasteness allowed, with little variety of style, hardly any of the graces of manner, he no sooner rose than he carried away every hearer, and kept the attention fixed and unflagging till it pleased him to let it go; and then

“So charming left his voice, that we, awhile,
Still thought him speaking, still stood fixed to hear.”

This magical effect was produced by his unbroken flow, which never, for a moment, left the hearer in pain or doubt, and yet was not the mean fluency of mere relaxation, requiring no effort of the speaker, but imposing on the listener a heavy task; by his lucid arrangement,

which made all the parts of the most complicated subject quit their entanglement, and fall each into its place; by the clearness of his statements, which presented at once a picture to the mind; by the forcible appeals to strict reason and strong feeling, which formed the great staple of the discourse; by the majesty of the diction: by the depth and fulness of the most sonorous voice, and the unbending dignity of the manner, which ever reminded us, that we were in the presence of more than an advocate or debater, or even an orator—that there stood before us a ruler of the people. Such were the effects invariably of his singular eloquence; and they were as certainly produced on ordinary occasions, as in those grander displays when he rose to the height of some great argument; or indulged in vehement invective against some individual, and variegated his speech with that sarcasm of which he was so great, and, indeed, so little sparing a master; although even here all was uniform and consistent; nor did any thing, in any mood of mind, ever drop from him that was unsuited to the majestic frame of the whole, or could disturb the serenity of the full and copious flood that rolled along. But if such was the unfailing impression at first produced, and which, for a season absorbing the faculties, precluded all criticism; upon reflection, faults and imperfections certainly were disclosed. There prevailed a monotony in the matter, as well as in the manner; and even the delightful voice, which so long prevented this from being felt, was itself almost without any variety of tone. All things were said nearly in the same way; as if by some curious machine, periods were rounded and flung off; as if, in like moulds, though of different sizes, ideas were shaped and brought out. His composition was correct enough, but not peculiarly felicitous; his English was sufficiently pure without being at all racy, or various, or brilliant; his style was, by Mr. Windham, called “a state paper style,” in allusion to its combined dignity and poverty; and the same nice observer, referring to the eminently skilful way in which he balanced his phrases, sailed near the

wind, and seemed to disclose much, whilst he kept the greater part of his meaning to himself, declared that he “verily believed Mr. Pitt could speak a king’s speech off-hand.” His declamation was admirable, mingling with and clothing the argument, as to be good for any thing, it always must; and no more separable from the reasoning, than the heat is from the metal in a stream of lava. Yet, with all this excellence, the last effect of the highest eloquence was for the most part wanting: seldom forgot the speaker, or lost the artist in the work. He was correct enough; he seemed quite sincere; he was moved himself as he would move us; we even went along with him, and forgot *ourselves*; but we hardly ever forgot *him*; and while thrilled with the glow which his burning words diffused, or transfixed with wonder at so marvellous a display of skill, we yet felt that it was admiration of a consummate artist which filled us, and that after all we were present at an exhibition;—gazing upon a wonderful performer indeed, but still a performer.

We have ventured to name the greatest displays of Mr. Fox’s oratory; and it is fit we should attempt as much by his illustrious rival’s. The speech on the war of 1803, which, by an accident that befell the gallery, was never reported, is generally supposed to have excelled all his other performances in vehement and spirit-stirring declamation; and this may be the more easily believed when we know that Mr. Fox, in his reply, said, “the orators of antiquity would have admired—probably would have envied it.” The last half hour is described as having been one unbroken torrent of the most majestic declamation. Of those which are in any degree preserved (though it must be remarked that the characteristics which we have given of his eloquence show how much of it was sure to escape, even the fullest transcript that could be given of the words,) the finest in all probability, is that upon the peace of 1783, and the coalition, when he closed his magnificent peroration by that noble, yet simple figure,—“And if this inauspicious union be not already consummated, in the name of my country, I forbid the banns.” But all authorities agree

in placing his speech upon the slave trade in 1791 before every other effort of his genius; because it combined, with the most impassioned declamation, the deepest pathos, the most lively imagination, and the closest reasoning. We have it from a friend of his own, who sat beside him on this memorable occasion, that its effects on Mr. Fox were manifest during the whole period of the delivery, while Mr. Sheridan expressed his feelings in the most hearty and even passionate terms; and we have it from Mr. Windham, that he walked home in amazement at the compass, till then unknown to him, of human eloquence. It is from the former source of information that we derive the singular fact of the orator's health at the time being such, as to require his retirement immediately before he rose, in order to take a medicine required for allaying the violent irritation of his stomach.

Let us, however, add, that he was from the first a finished debater, although certainly practice and the habit of command had given him more perfect quickness in perceiving an advantage and availing himself of an opening, as it were, in the adverse battle, with the skill and the rapidity wherewith our Wellington, in an instant perceiving the columns of Marmont somewhat too widely separated, executed the movement that gave him the victory of Salamanca. So did Mr. Pitt overthrow his great antagonist on the regency, and some other conflicts. It may be farther observed, that never was any kind of eloquence, or any cast of talents more perfectly suited to the position of leading the government forces, keeping up the spirits of his followers under disaster, encouraging them to stand a galling adverse fire;—above all, presenting them and the friendly though neutral portion of the audience, with reasons or with plausible pretexts for giving the government that support which the one class desired to give, and the other had no disposition to withhold. The effects which his calm and dignified, yet earnest manner produced on these classes, and the impression which it left on their minds, have been admirably portrayed by one of the most able among them, and with his well-chosen words

we close this imperfect sketch of so great a subject :—
 “Every part of his speaking, in sentiment, in language, and in delivery, evidently bore the stamp of his character. All communicated a varied apprehension of the qualities of strenuousness without bustle, unlaboured intrepidity, and severe greatness.”*

Nothing that we have yet said of this extraordinary person has touched upon his private character, unless so far as the graver faults of the politician must ever border upon the vices or the frailties of man. But it must be admitted, what even his enemies were willing to confess, that in his failings, or in his delinquencies, there was nothing mean, paltry, or low. His failings were ascribed to love of power and of glory; and pride was the harshest feature that disfigured him to the public eye. We doubt if this can all be said with perfect justice; still more that if it could, any satisfactory defence would be made. The ambition cannot be pronounced very lofty which showed that place, mere high station, was so dear to it as to be sought without regard to its just concomitant—power, and clung by, after being stripped of this, the only attribute that can recommend it to truly noble minds. Yet his office as “the pride of his heart and the pleasure of his life,” when, boasting that he had sacrificed it to his engagements with Ireland at the union; and then, within a very short period, he proved that the pleasure and the pride were far too dearly loved to let him think of that tie when he again grasped them,—wholly crippled, and deprived of all power to carry a single measure of importance. Nor can any thirst for power itself, any ambition, be it of the most exalted kind, ever justify the measures which he contrived for putting to death those former coadjutors of his own, whose leading object was reform; even if they had overstepped the bounds of law, in the pursuit of their common purpose. His conduct on the slave trade falls within the same view; and leaves a dark shade resting upon his reputation as a

* *Quarterly Review*, August, 1810.—Supposed to be by Mr. J. H. Frere, but avowedly an intimate personal friend.

man—a shade which, God be praised, few would take, to be the first of orators and greatest of ministers.

In private life he was singularly amiable; his spirits were naturally buoyant and even playful; his affections warm; his veracity scrupulously exact; his integrity wholly without stain; and, although he was, from his situation, cut off from most of the relations of domestic life, as a son and a brother he was perfect, and no man was more fondly beloved or more sincerely mourned by his friends.*

It was a circumstance broadly distinguishing the parliamentary position of the two great leaders whom we have been surveying, that while the one had to fight the whole battle of his government for many years, the first and most arduous of his life, if not single handed, yet with but one coadjutor of any power, the other was surrounded by “troops of friends,” any one of whom might well have borne the foremost part. Against such men as Burke, Windham, Sheridan, North, Erskine, Lee, Barré,—Mr. Pitt could only set Mr. Dundas; and it is certainly the most astonishing part of his history, that against such a phalanx, backed by the majority of the commons, he could struggle all through the first session of his administration. Indeed, had it not been for the support which he received both from the court and the lords, and from the people, who were justly offended with the unnatural coalition of his adversaries, this session would not only have been marvellous but impossible.

Of Mr. Fox's adherents whom we have named, the most remarkable certainly was Mr. Sheridan, and with

* The story told of his refusing to marry Mademoiselle Necker (afterwards Madame de Staël,) when the match was proposed by the father, rests upon a true foundation; but the form of the answer, “that he was already married to his country” has, unless it was a jest, which is very possible, no more foundation than the dramatic exit described by Mr. Rose in the House of Commons, when he stated, “Oh my country” to have been his last words—though it is certain that for many hours he only uttered incoherent sentences. Such things were too theatrical for so great a man, and of too vulgar a caste for so consummate a performer, had he stooped to play a part in such circumstances. He himself gave more than once a far more prosaic and very different reason for his never marrying.

all his faults, and all his failings, and all his defects, the first in genius and greatest in power. When the illustrious name of Erskine appears in the bright catalogue, it is unnecessary to add that we here speak of parliamentary genius and political power.

These sketches as naturally begin with a notice of the means by which the great rhetorical combatants were brought up, and trained and armed for the conflict, as Homer's battles do with the buckling on of armour and other note of preparation, when he brings his warriors forward upon the scene. Of Mr. Sheridan, any more than of Mr. Burke, it cannot be lamented, as of almost all other English statesmen, that he came prematurely into public life, without time given for preparation by study. Yet this time in his case had been far otherwise spent than in Mr. Burke's. Though his education had not been neglected, for he was bred at Harrow, and with Dr. Parr, yet he was an idle and a listless boy, learning as little as possible, and suffering as much wretchedness—an avowal which to the end of his life he never ceased to make, and to make in a very affecting manner. Accordingly, he brought away from school a very slender provision of classical learning; and his taste, never correct or chaste, was wholly formed by acquaintance with the English poets and dramatists, and perhaps a few of our more ordinary prose writers; for in no other language could he read with any thing approaching to ease. Of those poets, he most *professed* to admire and to have studied Dryden; he plainly *had* most studied Pope, whom he always vilified and always imitated. But of dramatists his passion evidently was Congreve, and after him Vanburgh, Fraquhar, even Wycherly: all of whom served for the model, partly even for the magazine of his own dramatic writings, as Pope did of his verses. "The Duenna," however, is formed after the fashion of Gay; of whom it falls farther short than the "School for Scandal" does of Congreve. That his plays were great productions for any age, astonishing for a youth of twenty-three and twenty-five, is unquestionable. Johnson has accounted for the phenomenon of Congreve, at

a still earlier period of life, showing so much knowledge of the world, by observing that, on a close examination, his dialogues and characters might have been gathered from books "without much actual commerce with mankind." The same can hardly be said of the "School for Scandal;" but the author wrote it when he was five years older than Congreve had been at the date of the "Old Batchelor."

Thus with an ample share of literary and dramatic reputation, but not certainly of the kind most auspicious for a statesman—with a most slender provision of knowledge at all likely to be useful in political affairs—with a position by birth and profession, little suited to command the respect of the most aristocratic country in Europe—the son of an actor, the manager himself of a theatre—he came into that parliament which was enlightened by the vast and various knowledge, as well as fortified and adorned by the more choice literary fame of a Burke, and which owned the sway of consummate orators like Fox and Pitt. His first effort was unambitious, and it was unsuccessful. Aiming at but a low flight, he failed in that humble attempt. An experienced judge, Woodfall, told him "it would never do;" and counselled him to seek again the more congenial atmosphere of Drury Lane. But he was resolved that it should do; he had taken his part; and, as he felt the matter was in him, he vowed not to desist till "he brought it out." What he wanted in acquired learning, and in natural quickness, he made up by indefatigable industry; within given limits, towards a present object, no labour could daunt him; and no man could work for a season with more steady and unwearied application. By constant practice in small matters, or before private committees, by diligent attendance upon all debates, by habitual intercourse with all dealers in political wares, from the chiefs or parties and their more refined coteries to the providers of daily discussion for the public and the chroniclers of parliamentary speeches, he trained himself to a felicity of speaking, absolutely essential to all but first-rate genius, and all but necessary even to that; and he acquired what acquaintance with the

science of politics he ever possessed, or his speeches ever betrayed. He rose by these steps to the rank of a first-rate speaker, and as great a debater as a want of readiness, and need for preparation would permit. He had some qualities which led him to this rank, and which only required the habit of speech to bring out into successful exhibition—a warm imagination, though more prone to repeat with variations the combinations of others, or to combine anew their creations, than to bring forth original productions—a fierce, dauntless spirit of attack—a familiarity, acquired from his dramatic studies, with the feelings of the heart and the ways to touch its chords—a facility of epigram and point, the yet more direct gift of the same theatrical apprenticeship—an excellent manner, not unconnected with that experience—and a depth of voice which perfectly suited the tone of his declamation, be it invective, or be it descriptive, or be it impassioned. His wit, derived from the same source, or sharpened by the same previous habits, was eminently brilliant, and almost always successful; it was like all his speaking, exceedingly prepared, but it was skilfully introduced and happily applied; and it was well mingled also with humour, occasionally descending to farce. How little it was the inspiration of the moment all men were aware who knew his habits; but a singular proof of this was presented by Mr. Moore when he came to write his life; for we there find given to the world the secret notebooks of this famous wit; and can trace the jokes, in embryo, with which he had so often made the walls of St. Stephen's shake, in a merriment excited by the happy appearance of sudden unpremeditated effusion.*

* Take an instance from this author, giving extracts from the Common-place book of the wit;—"He employs his fancy in his narrative, and keeps his recollections for his wit." Again, the same idea is expanded into—"When he makes his jokes, you applaud the accuracy of his memory, and 'tis only when he states his facts that you admire the flights of his imagination." But the thought was too good to be thus wasted on the desert air of a common-place book. So forth it came at the expense of Kelly, who having been a composer of music, became a wine merchant. "You will," said the *ready wit*, "import your music and compose your wine." Nor was this service exacted from the old

The adroitness with which he turned to account sudden occasions of popular excitement, and often at the expense of the whig party, generally too indifferent to such advantages, and too insensible to the damage they thus sustained in public estimation, is well known. On the mutiny in the fleet, he was beyond all question right; on the French invasion, and on the attacks upon Napoleon, he was almost as certainly wrong; but these appeals to the people and to the national feelings of the House, tended to make the orator well received, if they added little to the statesman's reputation; and of the latter character he was not ambitious. His most celebrated speech was certainly the one upon the "Begum Charge" in the proceedings against Hastings; and nothing can exceed the accounts left us of its unprecedented success. Not only the practice, then first began, which has gradually increased till it greets every good speech, of cheering, on the speaker resuming his seat, but the minister besought the House to adjourn the decision of the question, as being incapacitated from forming a just judgment under the influence of such powerful eloquence; whilst all men on all sides vied with each other in extolling so wonderful a performance. Nevertheless, the opinion has now become greatly prevalent, that a portion of this success was owing to the speech having so greatly surpassed all the speaker's former efforts; to the extreme interest of the topics which the subject naturally presented; and to the artist-like elaboration and beautiful delivery of certain fine passages, rather than to the merits of the whole. Certain it is, that the repetition of great part of it, presented in the short-hand notes of the speech on the same charge in Westminster Hall, disappoints every reader who has heard of the success which attended the earlier effort. In truth, Mr. Sheridan's taste was very far from being chaste, or even moderately correct; he delighted in gaudy figures; he was attracted by glare; and cared

idea thought sufficient—so in the House of Commons an easy and apparently off-hand parenthesis was thus filled with it at Mr. Dundas' cost and charge ("who generally resorts to his memory for his jokes, and to his imagination for his facts.")

not whether the brilliancy came from tinsel or gold: from the broken glass or the pure diamond; he overlaid his thoughts with epigrammatic diction; he "played to the galleries," and indulged them, of course, with an endless succession of clap-traps. His worst passages by far were those which he evidently preferred himself;—full of imagery often far-fetched, oftener gorgeous, and loaded with point that drew the attention of the hearer away from the thoughts to the words; and his best by far were those where he declaimed, with his deep clear voice, though somewhat thick utterance, with a fierce defiance of some adversary, or an unappeasable vengeance against some oppressive act; or reasoned rapidly, in the like tone, upon some plain matter of fact, or exposed as plainly to homely ridicule some puerile sophism; and in all this, his admirable manner was aided by an eye singularly piercing, and a countenance which, though coarse, and even in some features gross, was yet animated and expressive, and could easily assume the figure of both rage, and menace, and scorn. The few sentences with which he thrilled the House on the liberty of the press, in 1810, were worth, perhaps, more than all his elaborated epigrams and forced flowers on the Begum Charge, or all his denunciations of Napoleon; "whose morning orisons and evening prayers are for the conquest of England, whether he bends to the God of battles or worships the goddess of reason;"—certainly far better than such pictures of his power, as his having "thrones for his watch-towers, kings for his sentinels, and for the palisades of his castle, sceptres stuck with crowns." "Give them, said he, in 1810, and in a far higher strain of eloquence, "a corrupt House of Lords; give them a venal House of Commons; give them a tyrannical prince; give them a truckling court,—and let me but have an unfettered press; I will defy them to encroach a hair's breadth upon the liberties of England." Of all his speeches there can be little doubt that the most powerful, as the most chaste, was his reply in 1805, upon the motion which he had made for repealing the defence act. Mr. Pitt had unwarily thrown out a

sneer at his support of Mr. Addington, as though it was insidious. Such a stone cast by a person whose house on that aspect was one pane of glass, could not fail to call down a shower of missiles; and they who witnessed the looks and gestures of the aggressor under the pitiless pelting of the tempest which he had provoked, represent it as certain that there were moments when he intended to fasten a personal quarrel upon the vehement and implacable declaimer.*

When the just tribute of extraordinary admiration has been bestowed upon this great orator, the whole of his praise has been exhausted. As a statesman, he is without a place in any class, or of any rank; it would be incorrect and flattering to call him a bad, or a hurtful, or a short-sighted, or a middling statesman; he was no statesman at all. As a party man, his character stood lower than it deserved, chiefly from certain personal dislikes; for with the perhaps doubtful exception of his courting popularity at his party's expense on the two occasions already mentioned, and the much more serious charge against him of betraying his party in the Carlton House negotiation of 1812, followed by his extraordinary denial of the facts when he last appeared in parliament, there can nothing be laid to his charge as inconsistent with the rules of the strictest party duty and honour; although he made as large sacrifices as any unprofessional man ever did to the cause of a long and hopeless opposition, and was often treated with unmerited coldness and disrespect by his coadjutors. But as a man, his character stood confessedly low; his intemperate habits, and his pecuniary embarrassments, did not merely tend to imprudent conduct, by which himself alone might be the sufferer; they involved his family in the same fate; and they also undermined those principles of honesty which are so seldom found to survive fallen fortunes; and hardly ever can continue the ornament and the stay of ruined circumstances, when

* Mr. Sheridan wrote this speech during the debate at a coffee-house near the hall; and it is reported most accurately in the parliamentary debates, apparently from his own notes.

the tastes and the propensities engendered in prosperous times survive through the ungenial season of adversity. Over the frailties and even the faults of genius, it is permitted to draw a veil, after marking them as much as the interests of virtue require, in order to warn against the evil example, and preserve the flame bright and pure from such unworthy and unseemly contamination.

Among the members of his party, to whom we have alluded as agreeing ill with Mr. Sheridan, and treating him with little deference, Mr. Windham was the most distinguished. The advantages of a refined classical education—a lively wit of the most pungent and yet abstruse description—a turn for subtle reasoning, drawing nice distinctions and pursuing remote analogies—great and early knowledge of the world—familiarity with men of letters and artists, as well as politicians, with Burke, Johnson, and Reynolds, as well as with Fox and North—much acquaintance with constitutional history and principle—a chivalrous spirit, a noble figure, a singularly expressive countenance—all fitted this remarkable person to shine in debate; but were all, when put together, unequal to the task of raising him to the first rank; and were, besides, mingled with defects which exceedingly impaired the impression of his oratory, while they diminished his usefulness and injured his reputation as a statesman. For he was too often the dupe of his own ingenuity; which made him doubt and balance, and gave an oscitancy fatal to vigour in council, as well as most prejudicial to the effects of eloquence, by breaking the force of his blows as they fell. His nature, too, perhaps owing to this hesitating disposition, was to be a follower, if not a worshipper, rather than an original thinker or actor; as if he felt some relief under the doubts which harassed him from so many quarters, in thus taking shelter under a master's wing, and devolving upon a less scrupulous balancer of conflicting reasons, the task of trimming the scales, and forming his opinions for him. Accordingly, first, Johnson in private, and afterwards Burke on political matters, were the deities whom he adored; and

he adhered manfully to the strong opinions of the latter, though often-times painfully compelled to suppress his sentiments, all the time that he took counsel with Mr. Pitt and Lord Grenville, who would only consent to conduct the French war upon principles far lower and more compromising than those of the great anti-Jacobin and anti-Gallican leader. But when untrammelled by official connexion, and having his lips sealed by no decorum or prudence, or other observance prescribed by station, it was a brave sight to see this gallant personage descend into the field of debate, panting for the fray, eager to confront any man or any number of men that might prove his match, scorning all the little suggestions of a paltry discretion, heedless of every risk of retort to which he might expose himself, as regardless of popular applause as of court favour; nay, from his natural love of danger and disdain of every thing like fear, rushing into the most offensive expression of the most unpopular opinions with as much alacrity as he evinced in braving the power and daring the enmity of the crown. Nor was the style of his speaking at all like that of other men's. It was in the easy tone of familiar conversation; but it was full of nice observation and profound remark; it was instinct with classical allusion; it was even over-informed with philosophic and with learned reflection; it sparkled with the finest wit—a wit which was as far superior to Sheridan's, as his to the gambols of the clown, or the movements of Pantaloon; and his wit, how exuberant soever, still seemed to help on the argument, as well as to illustrate the meaning of the speaker. He was, however, in the main, a serious, a persuasive speaker, whose words plainly flowed from deep and vehement, and long considered and well weighed, feelings of the heart. "*Erat summa gravitas; erat cum gravitate junctus, facetiarum et urbanitatis oratorius non scurrilis lepos. Latine loquendi accurata et sine molestiâ diligens elegantia.*"

The rock on which he so often made shipwreck in debate, and still oftener in council or action, was that love of paradox, on which the tide of his exuberant ingenuity naturally carried him, as it does many others,

who finding so much more may be said in behalf of an untenable position than at first sight appeared possible to themselves, or than ordinary minds can at any time apprehend, begin to bear with the erroneous dogma, and end by adopting it,*

"They first endure, then pity, then embrace."

So he was from the indomitable bravery of his disposition, and his loathing of every thing mean, or that savoured of truckling to mere power, not unfrequently led to prefer a course of conduct or a line of argument, because of their running counter to public opinion or the general feeling; instead of confining his disregard to popularity within just bounds, and holding on his course in the pursuit of truth and right, in spite of its temporary disfavour with the people. With these errors there was generally much truth mingled, or at least much that was manifestly wrong tinged the tenets or the conduct he was opposing; yet he was not the less an unsafe counsellor and in debate a dangerous ally. His conduct on the volunteer question, the interference of the city with military rewards, the amusements of the people, and cruelty to animals, afforded instances of this mixed description, where he was led into error, by resisting almost equal error on the opposite hand; yet do these questions also afford proof of the latter part of the foregoing proposition; for what sound or rational view could justify his hostility to all voluntary defence, his reprobation of all expression of public gratitude to the services of our soldiers and sailors, his unqualified defence of bull-baiting, his resistance of all checks upon cruelty towards the brute creation? Upon other subjects of still graver import his paradoxes stood prominent and mischievous; unredeemed by ingenuity, unpalliated by opposite exaggeration, and even unmitigated by any admixture of truth. He defended the slave trade, which

* They who have been engaged in professional business with the late Mr. John Clerk (afterwards Lord Eldon) may recollect how often that great lawyer was carried away to entertain paradoxical opinions exactly by the process here described.

he had at first opposed, only because the French royalists were injured by the revolt which their own follies had occasioned in St. Domingo; he resisted all mitigation of our criminal law, only because it formed a part of our antiquated jurisprudence, like trial by battle, nay, by ordeal of fire and water; and he opposed every project for educating the people. It required all men's tenderness towards undoubted sincerity and clear disinterestedness to think charitably of such pernicious heresies in such a man. It demanded all this charity and all this faith in the spotless honour of his character, to believe that such opinions could really be the convictions of a mind like his. It was the greatest tribute which could be paid to his sterling merit, his fine parts, his rare accomplishments, that in spite of such wild aberrations, he was admired and beloved.

From what has been said of Mr. Windham's manner of speaking, as well as of his variously embellished mind, it will readily be supposed that in society he was destined to shine almost without a rival. His manners were the most polished, and noble, and courteous, without the least approach to pride, or affectation, or condescension; his spirits were, in advanced life, so gay, that he was always younger than the youngest; his relish of conversation was such, that after lingering to the latest moment, he joined whatever party a sultry evening (or morning as it might chance to prove) tempted to haunt the streets before retiring to rest. How often have we accompanied him to the door of his own mansion, and then been attended by him to our own, while the streets rang with the peals of his hearty merriment, or echoed the accents of his refined and universal wit! But his conversation, or grave or gay, or argumentative or discursive, whether sifting a difficult subject, or painting an interesting character, or pursuing a merely playful fancy, or lively to very drollery, or pensive and pathetic, or losing itself in the clouds of metaphysics, or vexed with paradox, or plain and homely and all but common-place, was that which, to be understood, must have been listened to; and while over the whole was flung a veil of unrent classical elegance,

through no crevice, had there been any, would ever an unkind or ill-conditioned sentiment have found entrance!

“Scilicet omne sacrum mors importuna profanat
Omnibus obscuras injicit ille manus—
Ossa quæta precor, tuta requiescite in urna;
Et sit humus cineri non onerosa tuo!”*

If we turn from those whom common principles and party connexion ranged against Mr. Pitt, to the only effectual supporter whom he could rely upon as a colleague on the Treasury Bench, we shall certainly find ourselves contemplating a personage of very inferior pretensions, although one whose powers were of the most useful description. Mr. Dundas, afterwards Lord Melville, had no claim whatever to those higher places among the orators of his age, which were naturally filled by the great men whom we have been describing; nor indeed could he be deemed *inter oratorum numerum* at all. He was a plain, business-like speaker; a man of every-day talents in the house; a clear, easy, fluent, and from much practice, as well as strong natural sense, a skilful debater; successful in profiting by an adversary's mistakes; distinct in opening a plan and defending a ministerial proposition; capable of producing even a great effect upon his not unwilling audience by his broad and coarse appeals to popular prejudices, and his confident statements of facts—those statements which Sir Francis Burdett once happily observed, “men naturally fall into through an inveterate habit of official assertion.” In his various offices no one was more useful. He was an admirable man of business; and those professional habits which he had brought from the bar (where he practised long enough for a youth of his fortunate family to reach the highest official place) were not more serviceable to him in making his speeches perspicuous, and his reasoning logical, than they were in disciplining

Relentless death each purer form profanes,
Round all that's fair his dismal arms he throws—
Tight lie the earth that shrouds thy loved remains,
And softly slumbering may they taste repose!—

his mind to the drudgery of the desk, and helping him to systematize, as well as to direct the machinery of his department. After quitting the profession of the law, to which, indeed, he had for some of the later years of Lord North's administration only nominally belonged, and leaving also the office of Lord Advocate, which he retained for several years after, he successively filled the place of minister for India, for the home and war departments, and for naval affairs. But it was in the first of these capacities, while at the head of the India board, and while chairman of the committee of the commons upon India, that his great capacity for affairs shone chiefly forth; and that he gave solid and long-continued proof of an indefatigable official industry, which neither the distractions of debate in parliament, nor the convivial habits of the man and of the times, ever could interrupt or relax. His celebrated reports upon all the complicated questions of our Asiatic policy, although they may not stand a comparison with some of Mr. Burke's in the profundity and enlargement of general views, any more than their style can be compared with his, are nevertheless performances of the greatest merit, and repositories of information upon that vast subject, unrivalled for clearness and extent. They, together with Lord Wellesley's despatches, form the sources from which the bulk of all the knowledge possessed upon Indian matters is to be derived by the statesmen of the present day.

If, in his official departments, and in the contests of parliament, Mr. Dundas rendered able service, and possessed great weight, it was in Scotland, his native country, whose language he spoke, and whose whole affairs he directed, that his power and his authority chiefly prevailed. Before the reform in our representation, and our municipal institutions, the undisturbed possession of patronage by a leading member of the government, was very sure to carry along with it a paramount influence both over the representatives of this ancient kingdom and over their constituents. Why submission to men in high place, and endowed with the power of conferring many favours, should have been so much

more absolute amongst us than amongst our southern neighbours, it would be needless to inquire. Whether it arose from the old feudal habits of the nation, or from its poverty, joined with a laudable ambition to rise in the world above the pristine station, or from the wary and provident character of the people,—certain it is that they displayed a devotion for their political superiors, and a belief in their infallibility, which would have done no discredit to the clansmen of those chieftains who, whilom both granted out the lands of the sept, retained the stipulated services of the vassal, and enjoyed the rights of jurisdiction and of punishment, whereby obedience was secured, and zealous attachment stimulated in its alliance with wholesome terror. That Mr. Dundas enjoyed this kind of ministerial sovereignty and homage in a more ample measure than any of his predecessors, was, no doubt, owing partly to the unhesitating and unqualified determination which regulated his conduct, of devoting his whole patronage to the support of his party, and to the extent of that patronage, from his being so long minister for India, as well as having the whole Scottish preferment at his absolute disposal; but it was also in part owing to the engaging qualities of the man. A steady and determined friend, who only stood the faster by those that wanted him the more—nay, who even in their errors or their faults would not give up his adherents—an agreeable companion, from the joyous hilarity of his manners—void of all affectation, all pride, all pretension—a kind and affectionate man in the relations of private life—and, although not always sufficiently regardful of strict decorum in certain particulars, yet never putting on the Pharisee's garb, or affecting a more "gracious state" than he had attained—friendly, self-denying to those inferiors in his department whose comforts so much depended on him—in his demeanour, hearty and good humoured to all—it is difficult to figure any one more calculated to win over those whom his mere power and station had failed to attach; or better fitted to retain the friends whom accident or influence might originally have attached to his person. That he

should for so many years have disposed of the votes in parliament of nearly the whole Scottish Commoners, and the whole peers, was, therefore, little to be wondered at; that his popularity and influence in the country at large, should have been boundless, during all this period, is as easily to be understood. There was then no doubt ever raised of the ministry's stability, or of Mr. Dundas's ample share in the dispensation of its favours. The political sky was clear and settled to the very verge of the horizon. There was nothing to disturb the hearts of anxious mortals. The wary and pensive Scot felt sure of his election, if he but kept by the true faith; and his path lay straight before him—the path of righteous devotion leading unto a blessed preferment. But our countrymen were fated to be visited by some troubles. The heavens became overcast—their luminary was for awhile concealed from devout eyes—in vain they sought him, but he was not. Uncouth names began to be named. More than two parties were talked of. Instead of the old, convenient, and intelligible alternative of “Pitt or Fox,”—“place or poverty,” which left no doubt in any rational mind which of the two to choose, there was seen—strange sight!—hateful and perplexing omen!—a ministry without Pitt, nay, without Dundas, and an opposition leaning towards its support. Those who are old enough to remember that dark interval, may recollect how the public mind among us was subdued with awe, and how we awaited in trembling silence the uncertain event, as all living things quail during the solemn pause that precedes an earthquake.

It was in truth a crisis to try men's souls. For awhile all was uncertainty and consternation; all were seen fluttering about like birds in an eclipse or a thunder storm; no man could tell whom he might trust;—nay, worse still, no man could tell of whom he might ask any think. It was hard to say, not who were in office, but who were likely to remain in office. Our countrymen were in dismay and distraction. It might truly be said they knew not which way to look, or whither to turn. Perhaps it might be yet more truly said, that

they knew not when to turn. But such a crisis was too sharp to last; it passed away; and then was to be seen a proof of Mr. Dundas's power amongst us, which transcended all expectation, and almost surpassed belief, if indeed it is not rather to be viewed as an evidence of the acute foresight—the political second sight—of the Scottish nation. The trusty band in both Houses actually were found adhering to him against the existing government; nay, he held the proxies of many Scottish peers in open opposition! Well might his colleague exclaim to the hapless Addington in such unheard-of troubles, “Doctor, the Thanes fly from us.” When the very Scotch peers wavered, and when the Grampian hills might next be expected to move about, it was time to think that the end of all things was at hand; and the return of Pitt and security, and patronage and Dundas, speedily ensued to bless old Scotland, and reward her providence, or her fidelity—her attachment at once to her patron—and to herself.

The subject of Lord Melville cannot be left complete without some mention of the event which finally deprived him of place and of power, though it hardly ever lowered him in the respect and affections of his countrymen. We allude, of course, to the resolutions carried by Mr. Whitbread on the 8th of April, 1805, with the speaker's casting voice, which led to the immediate resignation, and subsequent impeachment of this distinguished person. Mr. Pitt defended him strenuously, and only was compelled to abandon his friend and colleague, by the vote of the commons, which gave him “a bitter pang,” that as he pronounced the word made the hall resound, and seems yet to fill our ear. But after his death, while the government was in his rival's hands, and all the offices of the state were filled with the enemies of the accused, Lord Melville was brought to trial before his peers, and by a large majority acquitted, to the almost universal satisfaction of the country. Have we any right to regard him as guilty after this proceeding? It is true that the spirit of party is charged with the event of this memorable trial; but did nothing of that spirit preside over the proceedings

in the commons,—the grand inquest of the nation—which made the presentment—and put the accused upon his trial? That Lord Melville was a careless man and wholly indifferent about money, his whole life had shown. That he had replaced the entire sum temporarily used, was part even of the statement which charged him with misemploying it. That Mr. Pitt, whom no one ever accused of corruption, had been a party to two of his supporters using four times as much of the public money for a time, and without paying interest, was soon after proved; though for the purpose of pressing more severely upon Lord Melville, a great alacrity was shown to acquit the prime minister, by way of contrast to the treasurer of the navy. In a word, the case proved against him was not by any means so clear as to give us the right to charge the great majority of his peers with corrupt and dishonourable conduct in acquitting him; while it is a known fact that the judges who attended the trials were with the exception of the Lord Chief Justice, all clearly convinced of his innocence. Nor, let it be added, would the charge against him have been deemed, in the times of the Harleys and the Walpoles, of a nature to stain his character. Witness Walpole rising to supreme power after being expelled the House of Commons for corruption; and after having urged in his own defence, that the thousand pounds paid him by a contractor had been for the use of a friend, whom he desired to favour, and to whom he had paid it all over; not to mention his having received above seventeen thousand pounds under circumstances of the gravest suspicion, the day before he quitted office, and which he never seems to have accounted for except by saying he had the king's authority to take it.* We are sensible that these re-

* Mr. Coxe, in his *Life of Walpole*, cannot, of course, put the defence on higher ground than Walpole himself took, as to the £1000 received on the contract, in 1711, when he was secretary at war. As to the sum reported by the House of Commons' committee (£17461) to have been obtained by him in 1712, on the authority of two treasury orders, the biographer's main argument is, that the money must have been immediately wanted for public purposes, though these were never

marks will give little satisfaction to those whose political principles have always kept them apart from, and inimical to, Lord Melville. But to what purpose have men lived for above thirty years after the trial, and survived the object of the charge more than a quarter of a century, if they cannot now, and upon a mere judicial question, permit their judgments to have a free scope, deciding calmly upon events which belong to the history of the past, and involve the reputation of the dead?

The ministry of Mr. Pitt did not derive more solid service from the law in the person of Mr. Dundas, than the opposition party did ornament and popularity in that of Mr. Erskine. His parliamentary talents, although they certainly have been overrated, were as clearly not the prominent portion of his character. Nevertheless, it must be admitted that, had he appeared in any other period than the age of the Foxes, the Pitts, and the Burkes, there is little chance that he would have been eclipsed even as a debater; and the singular eloquence and effect of his famous speech against the Jesuits' Bark Bill in the House of Lords, abundantly proves this position. He never appears to have given his whole mind to the practice of debating; he had a very scanty pro-

particularized, and that the king must have approved the draught, because he signed the warrants. A weaker defence cannot well be conceived; nor is it much aided by the assertion which follows, that Sir Robert began writing a vindication of himself, which he broke off "on a conviction that his answer must either have been materially defective, or he must have related many things highly improper to be exposed to the public." The fact of a man, with an estate of about £2000 a-year at first, and which never rose to much above £4000, having lived extravagantly, and amassed above £200,000, is not at all explained by Mr. Coxe; and it is mainly on this expensive living and accumulation of fortune, that the suspicions which hang over his memory rest. But it is needless to say more upon a topic which could form no justification of Lord Melville, if he were guilty. The subject is only alluded to in this place for the purpose of showing how much more pure our public men now are, and how much higher is our standard of official virtue. The acquittal of Lord Melville was deemed insufficient to sanction his restoration to office; although Sir Robert Walpole, without any attempt to rescind the vote of 1712, was afterwards advanced to the place of prime minister, and held it for twenty years.

vision of political information; his time was always occupied with the laborious pursuits of his profession; he came into the House of Commons, where he stood among several equals, and behind some superiors, from a stage where he shone alone, and without a rival: above all, he was accustomed to address a select and friendly audience, bound to lend him their patient attention, and to address them by the compulsion of his retainer, not as a volunteer coming forward in his own person: a position from which the transition is violent and extreme, to that of having the whole effort of gaining and of keeping a promiscuous, and, in great part, a hostile audience, not under any obligation to listen one instant beyond the time during which the speaker can flatter, or interest, or amuse them. Earlier practice and more devotion to the pursuit, would doubtless have vanquished all these disadvantages; but they sufficed to keep Mr. Erskine always in a station far beneath his talents, as long as he remained in the House of Commons.

It is to the forum and not the senate, that we must hasten, if we would witness the "*coronam multiplicem—judicium erectum—crebras assensiones—multas admirationes—risum cum velit, cum velit fletum—in Scenâ Roscium;*" in fine, if we would see this great man in his element and in his glory. Nor let it be deemed trivial, or beneath the historian's province, to mark that noble figure, every look of whose countenance is expressive, every motion of whose form graceful—an eye that sparkles and pierces, and almost assures victory, while it "*speaks audience ere the tongue.*" Juries have declared that they felt it impossible to remove their looks from him when he had riveted and, as it were, fascinated them by his first glance; and it used to be a common remark of men who observed his motions, that they resembled those of a blood-horse; as light, as limber, as much betokening strength and speed, as free from all gross superfluity or incumbrance. Then hear his voice of surpassing sweetness, clear, flexible, strong, exquisitely fitted to strains of serious earnestness, deficient in compass, indeed, and much less fitted to express

indignation or even scorn than pathos, but wholly free from either harshness or monotony. All these, however, and even his chaste, dignified and appropriate action, were very small parts of this wonderful advocate's excellence. He had a thorough knowledge of men, of their passions and their feelings—he knew every avenue to the heart, and could at will make all its chords vibrate to his touch. His fancy, though never playful in public, where he had his whole faculties under the most severe control, was lively and brilliant; when he gave it vent and scope, it was eminently sportive; but while representing his client, it was wholly subservient to that in which his whole soul was wrapped up, and to which each faculty of body and of mind was subdued,—the success of the cause. His argumentative powers were of the highest order—clear in his statements, close in his applications, unwearied and never to be diverted in his deductions—with a quick and sure perception of his point, and undeviating in the pursuit of whatever established it—a nice discernment of the relative importance and weight of different arguments, and the faculty of assigning to each its proper place, so as to bring forward the main body of the reasoning in bold relief, and with its full breadth, and not weaken its effect by distracting and distributing the attention of the audience among lesser particulars. His understanding was eminently legal: though he had never made himself a great lawyer, yet could he conduct a purely legal argument with the most perfect success, and his familiarity with all the ordinary matters of his profession was abundantly sufficient for the purposes of the forum. His memory was accurate and retentive in an extraordinary degree; nor did he ever, during the trial of a cause, forget any matter how trifling soever, that belonged to it. His presence of mind was perfect in action—that is before the jury—when a line is to be taken up on the instant, and a question risked to a witness, or a topic chosen with the tribunal, on which the whole fate of the cause may turn. No man made fewer mistakes; none left so few advantages unimproved; before none was it so dangerous for an adversary to slumber and be off his guard;

for he was ever broad awake himself, and was as adventurous as he was skilful; and as apt to take advantage of any the least opening, as he was cautious to leave none in his own battle. But to all these great qualities he joined that fire, that spirit, that courage, which gave vigour and direction to the whole, and bore down all resistance. No man, with all his address and prudence, ever ventured upon more bold figures, and they were uniformly successful; for his imagination was vigorous enough to sustain any flight; his taste was correct, and even severe, and his execution felicitous in the highest degree. Without much familiar knowledge of even the Latin classics; with hardly any access to the beauties of the Attic eloquence, whether in prose or verse; with no knowledge of modern languages, his acquaintance with the English tongue was yet so perfect, and his taste so exquisite, that nothing could exceed the beauty of his diction, whatever subject he attempted;—whether discoursing on the most humble topics, of the most ordinary case in court or in society, or defending men for their lives, under the persecution of tyrannical power, wrestling against the usurpations of parliament, in favour of the liberty of the press, and upholding against the assaults of the infidel the fabric of revealed religion. Indeed the beauty, as well as chaste simplicity, of the language in which he would clothe the most lowly subjects reminded the classical scholar of some narratives in the *Odyssey*, where there is not one idea that rises above the meanest level, and yet all is made graceful and elegant by the magic of the diction. Aware that his classical acquirements were so slender, men oftentimes marvelled at the phenomenon of his eloquence, above all, of his composition. The solution of the difficulty lay in the constant reading of the old English authors to which he devoted himself: Shakspeare, he was more familiar with than almost any man of his age; and Milton he nearly had by heart. Nor can it be denied that the study of the speeches in “*Paradise Lost*” is as good a substitute as can be found for the immortal originals in the Greek models, upon which those great productions have manifestly been formed.

Such was his oratory; but the oratory is only the half, and the lesser half of the *Nisi Prius* advocate; and Mr. Erskine never was known to fail in the more important moiety of the part he had to sustain. The entire devotion to his cause which made him reject every thing that did not help it forward, and indignantly scorn all temptation to sacrifice its smallest point for any rhetorical triumph, was not the only virtue of his advocacy. His judgment was quick, sound, and sure, upon each successive step to be taken: his decision bold, but cautious and enlightened, at each turn. His speaking was hardly more perfect than his examination of witnesses,—the art in which so much of an English advocate's skill is shown; and his examination in chief was as excellent as his cross-examination;—a department so apt to deceive the vulgar, and which yet is, generally speaking, far less available, as it hardly ever is more difficult than the examination in chief, or in reply. In all these various functions, whether of addressing the jury, or urging objections to the court, or examining his own witnesses, or cross-examining his adversary's, this consummate advocate appeared to fill at one and the same time different characters;—to act as the counsel and representative of the party, and yet to be the very party himself; while he addressed the tribunal, to be also acquainted with every feeling and thought of the judge or the jury; and while he interrogated the witness, whether to draw from him all he knew, and in the most favourable shape, or to shake and displace all he had said that was adverse, he appeared to have entered into the mind of the person he was dealing with, and to be familiar with all that was passing within it. It is by such means that the hearer is to be moved, and the truth elicited; and he will ever be the most successful advocate who can approach the nearest to this lofty and difficult position.

The speeches of this great man are preserved to us with a care and correctness which those only of Mr. Burke, Mr. Windham, Mr. Canning, and Lord Dudley, among all the orators of whom we have treated, can boast. He had a great facility of composition; he

wrote both much and correctly. The five volumes which remain were all revised by himself; most of them at the several times of their first publication. Mr. Windham, too, is known to have left most of his speeches written out correctly in his own hand. The same care was bestowed upon their speeches by the others just named. Neither those of Mr. Fox or Mr. Pitt, nor with one or two exceptions, of Mr. Sheridan, ever enjoyed the same advantages; and a most unfair estimate would therefore be framed of their eloquence, as compared with that of others, were men only to form their judgment upon the records which the parliamentary debates present.

Of Mr. Erskine's, the first, beyond all doubt, was his speech for Stockdale, foolishly and oppressively prosecuted by the House of Commons for publishing the Reverend Mr. Logan's eloquent tract upon Hastings' impeachment. There are no finer things in modern, and few finer in ancient eloquence than the celebrated passage of the Indian chief; nor has beautiful language ever been used with more curious felicity to raise a striking and appropriate image before the mind, than in the simile of the winds "lashing before them the lazy elements, which without the tempest would stagnate into pestilence." The speeches on constructive treason are also noble performances; in which the reader never can forget the sublimity of the denunciation against those who took from the "file the sentence against Sidney, which should have been left on record to all ages, that it might arise and blacken in the sight, like the handwriting on the wall before the eastern tyrant, to deter from outrages upon justice." One or two of the speeches upon seduction, especially that for the defendant in *Howard v. Bingham*, are of exquisite beauty.

It remains that we commemorate the deeds which he did, and which cast the fame of his oratory into the shade. He was an undaunted man; he was an undaunted advocate. To no court did he ever tremble, neither to the court of the king, neither to the court of the king's judges. Their smiles and their frowns he disregarded alike, in the fearless discharge of his duty. He

upheld the liberty of the press against the one; he defended the rights of the people against both combined to destroy them. If there be yet amongst us the power of freely discussing the acts of our rulers; if there be yet the privilege of meeting for the promotion of needful reforms; if he who desires wholesome changes in our constitution, be still recognised as a patriot, and not doomed to die the death of a traitor; let us acknowledge with gratitude, that to this great man, under heaven, we owe this felicity of the times. In 1794, his dauntless energy, his indomitable courage, kindling his eloquence, inspiring his conduct, giving direction and lending firmness to his matchless skill, resisted the combination of statesmen, and princes, and lawyers,—the league of cruelty and craft, formed to destroy our liberties,—and triumphantly scattered to the winds, the half accomplished scheme of an unsparing proscription. Before such a precious service as this, well may the lustre of statesmen and of orators grow pale; and yet this was the achievement of one only, not the first orator of his age, and not among its foremost statesmen, because he was beyond all comparison the most accomplished advocate, and the most eloquent, that modern times have produced.

The disposition and manners of the man were hardly less attractive than his genius and his professional skill were admirable. He was, like almost all great men, simple, natural, and amiable; full of humane feelings and kindly affections. Of wit, he had little or none in conversation; and he was too gay to take any delight in discussion; but his humour was playful to buoyancy, and wild even to extravagance; and he indulged his roaming and devious and abrupt imagination as much in society, as in public, he kept it under rigorous control. That his private character was exempt from failings, can in no wise be affirmed. The egotism which was charged upon his conversation, and in which he only seemed to adopt the habit of the forensic leaders of his times, was wholly unmingled with any thing offensive to others; though it might excite a smile at his own expense. Far from seeking to raise himself by their de-

pression, his vanity was of the best-natured and least selfish kind; it was wholly social and tolerant, and, as it were, gregarious; nay, he always seemed to extol the deeds of others, with fully more enthusiasm than he ever displayed in recounting his own. But there were darker places to be marked, in the extreme imprudence with which some indulgences were sought, and unfortunate connexions, even late in life, formed. Lord Kenyon, who admired and loved him fervently, and used always to appear as vain of him as a school-master of his favourite pupil, though himself rigorous to the point of ascetism, was wont to call these imperfections, viewing them tolerantly, "spots in the sun;" and it must with sorrow be added, that as the lustre of the luminary became more dim, the spots did not contract in their dimensions. The usual course on such occasions is to say *Taceamus de his*,—but history neither asserts her greatest privilege, nor discharges her higher duties, when, dazzled by brilliant genius, or astonished by splendid triumphs, or even softened by amiable qualities, she abstains from marking those defects which so often degrade the most sterling worth, and which the talents and the affections that they accompany may sometimes seduce men to imitate.

The striking and imposing appearance of this great man's person has been mentioned. His herculean strength of constitution may be also noted. During the eight-and-twenty years that he practised at the bar, he never was prevented for one hour from attending to his professional duties. At the famous state trials in 1794, he lost his voice on the evening before he was to address the jury. It returned to him just in time, and this, like other felicities of his career, he always ascribed to a special providence, with the habitually religious disposition of mind which was hereditary in the godly families that he sprung from.

Greatly inferior to these men—indeed of a different class, as well as order—but far from an inconsiderable person in debate, where he had his own particular line, and in that eminently excelled, was Mr. Tierney. He had been bred to the law, was called to the bar, and for

a short time frequented the western circuit, on which he succeeded Mr. Pitt in the office of recorder, or keeper of the circuit books and funds; a situation filled by the youngest member of the profession on the several circuits each successive year. He soon, however, like his illustrious predecessor, left the hard and dull, and for many years cheerless path, which ends in the highest places in the state, and the most important functions of the constitution: and devoted himself to the more inviting, but more thorny and even more precarious pursuits of politics; in which merit, if it never fails of earning fame and distinction, very often secures nothing more solid to its possessor; and which has the farther disadvantage of leading to power, or to disappointment, according to the conduct or the caprice of others, as much as of the candidate himself. No man more than Mr. Tierney lived to experience the truth of this remark; and no man more constantly advised his younger friends to avoid the fascinations which concealed such snares and led to those rocks. In truth, no one had a better right to give this warning; for his talents were peculiarly fitted for the contentions of the legal profession, and must have secured him great eminence had he remained at the bar; but they were accompanied with some defects which proved exceedingly injurious to his success as a statesman. He possessed sufficient industry to master any subject, and, until his health failed, to undergo any labour. His understanding was of that plain and solid description which wears well, and is always more at the command of its possessor than the brilliant qualities that dazzle the vulgar. To any extraordinary quickness of apprehension he laid no claim; but he saw with perfect clearness, and, if he did not take a very wide range, yet within his appointed scope, his ideas were strongly formed, and, when he stated them, luminously expressed. Every thing refined he habitually rejected; partly as above his comprehension, partly as beneath his regard; and he was wont to value the efforts of fancy still lower than the feats of subtilty; so that there was something extremely comical in witnessing the contrast of his homely and somewhat literal under-

standing with the imaginative nature of Erskine. But if refinement and fancy, when tried upon him apart, met with this indifferent reception, their combination in any thing romantic, especially when it was propounded as a guide of conduct, fared still worse at his hands; and if he ever found such views erected into a test or standard for deciding either on public or on private affairs, he was apt to treat the fabric rather as the work of an unsound mind, than as a structure to be seriously exposed and taken to pieces by argument.

Nevertheless, with all this shunning of fanciful matter, no one's mind was more accessible to groundless imaginations; provided they entered by one quarter, on which he certainly lay his weak side as a politician. A man undeniably of cool personal courage; a debater of as unquestioned boldness and vigour; he was timid in council; always saw the gloomy side of things; could scarcely ever be induced to look at any other aspect; and tormented both himself and others with endless doubts and difficulties, and apprehensions of things barely possible, as if in human affairs, from the crossing of a street to the governing of a kingdom, men were not compelled either to stand stock-still, or to expose themselves to innumerable risks—acting, of course, only on probabilities, and these often not very high ones. It was a singular thing to observe how complete a change the same individual had undergone in passing from the consultation to the debate. The difference was not greater between Erskine out of court and in his professional garb.^o He was firm in the line once taken, against which he had raised a host of objections, and around which he had thrown a cloud of doubts: he was as bold in meeting real enemies as he had been timid in conjuring up imaginary risks; prompt, vigorous, determined, he carried on the debate; and he who in a distant view of it could only descry difficulties and create confusion, when the tug of war approached, and he came to close quarters, displayed an abundance of resources which astonished all who had been harassed with his hesitation, or confounded by his perplexities, or vexed with his apprehensions; and was found to have

no eyes but for the adversary whom his whole soul was bent upon meeting; nor any circumspection but for the possibility of a reply which he was resolved to cut off.

It is probable, however, that this defect in his character as a politician had greatly increased as he grew older. In early times he was among the more forward of the reformers. When he quitted the bar he offered himself as a candidate for several vacant seats and was unsuccessful. He attended the debates at the East India House as a proprietor; and took an active part in them. He was an assiduous member of the "Society of Friends of the People," and drew up the much and justly celebrated Petition in which that useful body laid before the House of Commons all the more striking particulars of its defective title to the office of representing the people, which that house then, as now, but with far less reason, assumed. He contested the borough of Southwark more than once, and was seated ultimately in 1796, and by a committee before which he conducted his own case with an ability so striking, that all who witnessed it at once augured most favourably of his prospects in the house, and confessed that his leaving the bar had alone prevented him from filling the highest place among the ornaments of Westminster Hall. In that contest, his acuteness, his plain and homely sense, his power of exposing a sophism, or ridiculing a refinement, shone conspicuous; and his inimitable manner,—a manner above all others suited to his style of speaking and thinking, and singularly calculated to affect a popular audience,—was added to the other qualities which he showed himself possessed of, and by which he won and kept hold of the committee's undivided attention.

His entry into the House of Commons was made at a sufficiently remarkable period of time. The whig opposition had just taken the most absurd and inconsistent, as well as the most unjustifiable step which ever party or public men resorted to, in order to show the bitterness of their disappointment, to justify their enemies in deducing all their actions from selfish motives, and to lend the doctrine some plausibility, which the enemies of all party connexion hold, when they deny its use, and

regard it as a mere association for interested purposes ; not dictated by any public principle, but dressing itself falsely and fraudulently in that decent garb. They had retired or seceded from their attendance in parliament, upon the very grounds which should have chained them faster to their seats ; namely, that the government was ruining the interests and trampling upon the liberties of the country ; and that the people were not sufficiently alive to the situation of their own affairs. If any thing could add to the folly as well as impropriety of this measure, it was the incompleteness of the secession ; for instead of leaving parliament, and thus enabling the people to choose more faithful guardians of their interests, these men all retained their seats, kept fast hold of their personal privileges, and preserved the option of returning upon any fitting or temporary occasion, to the places which they left empty and ready. The Irish parliament afforded, upon this occasion, one of the two instances of its superiority to our own, which the whole history of that bad and corrupt assembly presents.* The opposition there, with Mr. Grattan at its head, vacated their seats and remained out of parliament for some years. Strange that the place where political purity was the most rare, where true patriotism was ever at its lowest ebb,—where the whole machinery of corruption,—all that men call jobbing and faction was proverbially hereditary and constitutional,—and where it has always been so usual to expect as little correctness of reasoning as consistency and purity of conduct,—an example should have been afforded of just and rational conduct, and self-denial, upon the point of jobbing itself, which the patriots of England were neither wise enough nor disinterested enough to follow ! This phenomenon, otherwise hard to be explained, is accounted for by the character of the illustrious man whom we have named as leader of the Irish whigs.

The absence of the regular leaders of the opposition and their followers from parliament gave Mr. Tierney a ready opening to distinction upon his entering the

* The other was on the regency 1788-9.

House of Commons;—an opening of which far less sagacity and resources than he possessed might have taken advantage. He became at once, and from the necessity of the case, in some sort the leader of the opposition. The subject to which he mainly directed himself was the financial department; but without at all confining his exertions to questions of this description. The clearness of his understanding, however, and his business-like habits, gave him a peculiar advantage upon such matters; and he retained his hold over it, and as it were, an almost exclusive possession of it during the whole of his parliamentary life. It seems strange to look back upon the hands out of which he took this branch of opposition business. Mr. Sheridan was the person to whom he succeeded, and who really must be admitted to have been, in every respect, as moderately qualified for performing it as any one of his great abilities could well be. But it must not be supposed that the secession of the regular party left all finance questions, or all questions of any kind, in the hands of him whom they considered as an officious unwelcome substitute, and affected to look down upon as an indifferent makeshift in the hands of the ministers; ever ready to catch at any semblance of a regular opposing party, for the convenience which it affords in conducting the public business. When the Irish rebellion, and still more, when the union, and soon after the failure of the Dutch expedition seemed to afford a chance of “doing something,” they came down and joined in the debate. To Mr. Tierney was left the weary and painful but not unimportant duty of watching daily the proceedings of the government, and of the house, in which it now ruled with an absolute sway. Whatever was most irksome and laborious, most thankless and obscure in the drudgery of daily attendance, and the discomfiture of small divisions, fell to his share. It was only when the reward of such toils and vexations appeared in view, upon some great occasion presenting itself for assaulting a minister invincible in parliament, but defeated with discredit in his schemes, and assailing him with the support of the country as well as of fortune, that Mr. Tierney was quickly nor

yet very gently put on one side; to make way for the greater men who had been engaged in any pursuit, rather than that of their country's favour, and doing any service but that which they owed to their constituents. With what front they could have offered themselves again to those constituents had a general election befallen them before some change had happened in their policy, it would be difficult to conjecture. But fortunately for them as for the country, the administration of Mr. Addington afforded a fair opportunity, perhaps a pretext, of which they were desirous, for resuming their attendance in parliament; and no one has ever since, in a tone more audible than a whisper, ventured to mention the experiment of secession, as among the ways and means for bettering the condition of a party. It must, however, be added, that when the election of 1802 came, the people, by showing an entire forgetfulness of the greatest violation of public duty ever committed by their representatives, and never once mentioning the secession on any one occasion, exhibited an inconstancy and neglect of their own best interests, truly painful to those who deem them not only the object, but the origin of all political power; and who, moreover, hold it impossible that any power bestowed upon men can be well or safely executed without a continuance of wholesome popular control. The comfort which we now have under this unpleasant recollection, is derived from an assurance that such never could be the case in the present times. No man, or class of men, dare now leave their parliamentary post, without at the same time throwing up their delegated trust; and whoever should attempt to repeat the game of 1797 in our times, would find the doors of parliament closed against him, should he be rash enough again to seek admission through any place having a real body of electors.

In the times of which we have been speaking, Mr. Tierney was one of those whigs who, partly through hostility to Mr. Pitt, and partly from a sincere gratitude for the peace abroad, and the mild and constitutional government at home, obtained for the country by Mr. Addington, first supported, and afterwards formally

joined that minister, upon his rupture with his patron and predecessor. It was unfortunate that Mr. Tierney should have taken office almost on the eve of his new leader committing as great an error, and as fatal as ever could be imputed to his warlike adversary. Mr. Addington having been joined by Mr. Tierney late in 1802, plunged the country, early in 1803, again into war; for reasons, which, if they had any force, should have prevented him from making peace the year before: and even if Napoleon was desirous of breaking the treaty, care was taken by the manner of the quarrel which we fastened upon him, to give him every appearance, in the eyes of the world, of having been reluctantly forced into a renewal of hostilities.

The removal of Mr. Tierney from the opposition to the ministerial benches, was not attended with any increase either of his weight in the country, or his powers in debate. No man certainly had a right to charge him with any violation of party duty; for he had never been connected with the regular whig opposition, and had been treated upon all occasions with little respect by their leaders. Yet in his opinions he agreed with them; they had always professed the same principles upon those great questions, whether of foreign or domestic policy, which divided public men; and he was now in office with statesmen who only differed from those whom he had always opposed, in the inferiority of their capacity; in having done their patron's bidding by restoring peace and the constitution,—both of which he had suspended,—and in refusing to go out and let him in again when that turn was served. There was little ground then for drawing any distinction between the two classes of Pittites; upon principle none; only a personal difference divided them; and to that difference Mr. Tierney was wholly a stranger, until he chose to take a part in it, by taking office upon it. But, as has often happened to men who thus place themselves in what our French neighbours term a "false position," his weight in the house was not more remarkably lessened than his gift of debating was impaired. He never seemed to be thoroughly possessed of himself, or to feel

at home, after taking his seat on the treasury bench; among the Jenkinsons, the Bragges, the Yorks, the Percevals, and the other supporters of Mr. Addington's somewhat feeble, though certainly very useful administration. It was drolly said of the latter—in reference to the rather useless acquisition which he appeared to have made—that he resembled the worthy but not very acute lord who bought Punch. Upon more than one occasion, words of a graver character were heard from the great master of sarcasm to convey the same idea. When, in an attempt to defend the naval administration of the government against Mr. Pitt's unmeasured attacks, their new champion, with signal infelicity, adventured upon some personal jeers* at their assailant's expense, the latter remarked in very good humour, "that he had not found him quite so formidable an antagonist in his novel situation, though he nowise questioned his capacity for ministerial exertions, and should wait until his infant aptitudes had expanded to their destined fulness." The overthrow of the Addington ministry soon restored Mr. Tierney to the ranks of opposition; and his union with the whigs afterwards became so complete, that he acted for some years after the death of Mr. Whitbread and Mr. Ponsonby as their real leader in the commons; and during one session was installed formally as their chief.

The instances to which we have just adverted, may truly be said to be the only failures in Mr. Tierney's

* If we mention the nature of these attempts, it must be after a very distinct and peremptory protest against being understood to give them as samples of the humour, and indeed wit in which Mr. Tierney peculiarly excelled—for they were exceptions to it, and were his only failures. He spoke of Mr. Pitt's motion as "smelling of a contract"—and even called him "the Right Hon. Shipwright"—in allusion to his proposal to build men-of-war in the Merchants' Yards. On one occasion he fell by a less illustrious hand—but yet the hand of a wit. When alluding to the difficulties the Foxites and Pittites had of passing over to join each other in attacking the Addington ministry, Mr. Tierney (forgetting at the moment how easily he had himself overcome a like difficulty in joining that ministry) alluded to the puzzle of the Fox and the Goose, and did not clearly expound his idea. Whereupon Mr. Dudley North said: "It's himself he means—who left the Fox to go over to the Goose, and put the bag of oats in his pocket." His failures are told in three lines; but a volume would not hold the successful efforts of his drollery both in debate and in society.

whole parliamentary career. For he was one of the surest and most equal speakers that ever mingled in debate; and his style of speaking was very enviable in this particular. It seemed so easy and so natural to the man, as to be always completely at his command; depending on no happy and almost involuntary flights of fancy, or moods of mind, or any of the other incidents that affect and limit the inspirations of genius;—hardly even upon fire caught from an adversary's speech, or an accident in the debate, and which is wont to kindle the eloquence of the greater orators. Whoever heard him upon any occasion, had the impression that such he would be upon all; and that, whenever he chose it, he could make as good a speech, and of the same kind. Nor was that excellence small; or that description of oratory contemptible. It was very effective at all times; at some times of very great force indeed. His power of plain and lucid statement was not easily to be surpassed; and this served him in special stead upon questions of finance and trade, which he so often handled. His reasoning was equally plain and distinct. He was as argumentative a speaker as any one could be who set so little value upon subtilty of all sorts; and who always greatly preferred the shorter roads towards a conclusion, to laboured ratiocination; and quick retorts suggested by the course of the discussion, to any thing elaborate or long. In these retorts, whether of allusion, or repartee, or personal attack, his excellence was very great. When occasion required it, he could rise into a strain of very effective and striking declamation; and although never attempting any flight of a lofty kind, yet never once failing to reach whatever he aimed at. His wit, or his humour, or his drollery, it would be very difficult to describe—nor easy to say how it should be classed. Perhaps, of the three words we have used in order to be sure of comprehending or hitting it, the second is the most appropriate. He had the great requisites of a powerful debater,—quickness in taking his ground, and boldness in holding it; and could instantly perceive an enemy's weakness, and his own course to take advantage of it. But we now

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speak of him when on his legs; for the defect in his character, of which we before made mention, followed him into the House of Commons, and he was wanting in decision and vigour there also, until he rose; when a new man seemed to stand before you.

It remains to be said, that no man's private character stood higher in all respects; and, besides the most amiable domestic affections, he showed a very touching patience, and even cheerfulness, in sustaining the distressing attacks of illness under which he laboured for many of the latter years of his life. He was of strictly religious habits, although without any thing of either austerity or fanaticism; and is said to have left some devotional compositions, which prove how deeply impressed his mind was by the feelings connected with the most important of all subjects. It must not be forgotten, in speaking of Mr. Tierney's adherence to the liberal party, during their long and all but hopeless exclusion from office, that he was neither sustained in his independent and honest course by any enthusiasm or fervour of character, nor placed in circumstances which made the emoluments of place indifferent to the comforts of his life. A person of his very moderate fortune, and plain, practical, even somewhat cold habits of thinking, upon questions which warm so many minds into the fervour of romantic patriotism, has double merit in perseveringly discharging his public duties, and turning a deaf ear to all the allurements of power.

And here for the present let us pause. We have been gazing on the faint likeness of many great men. We have been traversing a gallery, on either side of which they stand ranged. We have made bold in that edifice to "expatiate and confer the state affairs" of their age. Cognizant of its history, aware of the principles by which the English chiefs are marshalled, sagacious of the springs that move the politic wheel whose revolutions we contemplate, it is an easy thing for us to comprehend the phenomenon most remarkably presented by those figures and their arrangement; nor are we led to stare aghast at that which would astound any mind not previously furnished with the ready solution to make all plain and intelligible. But suppose some one from ano-

ther hemisphere or another world, admitted to the spectacle, which we find so familiar, and consider what would be its first effect upon his mind. "Here," he would say, "stand the choicest spirits of their age; the greatest wits, the noblest orators, the wisest politicians, and the most illustrious patriots. Here they stand whose hands have been raised for their country, whose magical eloquence shook the spheres, whose genius has poured out strains worthy the inspiration of the gods, whose lives were devoted to the purity of their principles, whose memories were bequeathed to a race grateful for benefits received from their sufferings and their sacrifices." Here stand all these "lights of the world and demi-gods of fame,"—but here they stand not ranged on one side of this gallery, serving a common country! With the same bright object in their view, their efforts were divided, not united; they fiercely combated each other, and not together assailed some common foe: their great exertions were bestowed, their more than mortal forces were expended, not in farthering the general good, not in resisting their country's enemies, but in conflicts among themselves; and all their triumphs were won over each other, and all their sufferings were endured at each other's hands! "Is it," the unenlightened stranger would add, "a reality, that I survey, or a troubled vision that mocks my sight? Am I, indeed, contemplating the prime of men amongst a rational people, or the Coryphei of a band of mimes? Or, haply, am I admitted to survey the cells of some hospital appointed for the insane; or is it, peradventure, the vaults of some pandemonium through which my eyes have been suffered to wander till my vision aches, and my brain is disturbed?"

Thus far the untutored native of some far distant wild on earth, or the yet more ignorant inhabitant of some world, remote beyond "the solar walk or milky way." We know more; we apprehend things better. But let us, even in our pride of enlightened wisdom, pause for a moment to reflect on this most anomalous state of things,—this arrangement of political affairs which systematically excludes at least one-half of the

great men of each age from their country's service, and devotes both classes infinitely more to maintaining a conflict with one another than to farthering the general good. And here it may be admitted at once that nothing can be less correct than their view, who regard the administration of affairs as practically in the hands of only one-half the nation, whilst the excluded portion is solely occupied in thwarting their proceedings. The influence of both parties is exerted, and the movement of the state machine partakes of both the forces impressed upon it; neither taking the direction of the one nor of the other, but a third line between both. This concession, no doubt, greatly lessens the evil; but it is very far indeed from removing it. Why must there always be this exclusion, and this conflict? Does not every one immediately perceive how it must prove detrimental to the public service in the great majority of instances; and how miserable a make-shift for something better and more rational it is, even where it does more good than harm? Besides, if it requires a constant and systematic opposition to prevent mischief, and keep the machine of state in the right path, of what use is our boasted representative government, which is designed to give the people a control over their rulers, and serves no other purpose at all?

It must not be supposed that in these general remarks upon party, we are pronouncing a very severe censure upon all public men in this country, or placing ourselves on an eminence removed from strife, and high above all vulgar contentions.—

*Despicere unde queas alios, passimque videre,
Errare, atque viam palanteis quærere vitæ,
Certare ingenio, contendere nobilitate,
Nocteis atque dies niti præstante labore
Ad summas emergere opes, rerumque potiri.*

LUC. II.

The blame now cast upon politicians affects them all equally; and is only like that which ethical reasoners on the selfish theory of morals, may be supposed to throw upon all human conduct. In fact, our blame ap-

plies not to individuals, but to the system; and that system we hold to be bad;—hurtful to the interests of the country, corrupting to the people, injurious to honest principle, and at the very best, a clumsy contrivance for carrying on the affairs of the state.

Let us now, before we close this view of the times recently passed, and of the great men who flourished in them, amongst ourselves, cast our eye towards the genius that directed the resources of our enemies, unimpaired by our party divisions, and with all the unity of despotism besides. During the most eventful period of the age in which they flourished, the destinies of France, and of the continent, were wielded by Napoleon Bonaparte; certainly the most extraordinary person who has appeared in modern times, and to whom, in some respects, no parallel can be found if we search the whole annals of the human race. For though the conquests of Alexander were more extensive, and the matchless character of Cæsar was embellished by more various accomplishments, and the invaders of Mexico and Peru worked their purposes of subjugation with far more scanty means, yet the military genius of the great captain shines with a lustre peculiarly its own; or which he shares with Hannibal alone, when we reflect that he never had to contend, like those conquerors, with adversaries inferior to himself in civilization or discipline, but won all his triumphs over hosts as well ordered and regularly marshalled, and amply provided, as his own.

This celebrated man was sprung from a good family in Corsica, and while yet a boy, fixed the attention and raised the hopes of all his connexions. In his early youth his military genius shone forth; he soon gained the summit of his profession; he commanded at twenty-five a military operation of a complicated and difficult nature in Paris; immediately after, he rapidly led the French armies through a series of victories, till then unexampled, and to which even now his own after achievements, can alone afford any parallel, for the suddenness, the vehemence, and the completeness of the

operations. That much of his success was derived from the mechanical adherence of his adversaries to the formal rules of ancient tactics, cannot be doubted; and our Wellington's campaigns would, in the same circumstances, and had he been opposed to similar antagonists, in all likelihood, have been as brilliant and decisive. But he always had to combat the soldiers bred in Napoleon's school; while Napoleon, for the most part, was matched against men whose inveterate propensity to follow the rules of an obsolete science, not even the example of Frederic had been able to subdue; and who were resolved upon being a second time the victims of the same obstinate blindness which had, in Frederic's days, made genius triumph over numbers, by breaking through rules repugnant to common sense. It must, however, be confessed, that although this consideration accounts for the achievements of this great warrior, which else had been impossible, nothing is thus detracted from his praise, excepting that what he accomplished ceases to appear miraculous; for it was his glory never to let an error pass unprofitably to himself: nor ever to give his adversary an advantage which he could not ravish from him, with ample interest, before it was turned to any fatal account. Nor can it be denied that, when the fortune of war was proved adverse, the resources of his mind were only drawn forth in the more ample profusion. After the battle of Aspern he displayed more skill, as well as constancy, than in all his previous campaigns; and the struggle which he made in France, during the dreadful conflict that preceded his downfall, is by many regarded as the masterpiece of his military life. Nor let us forget that the grand error of his whole career, the mighty expedition to Moscow, was a political error only. The vast preparations for that campaign—the combinations by which he collected and marshalled and moved this prodigious and various force like a single corps, or a domestic animal, or a lifeless instrument in his hand—displayed in the highest degree the great genius for arrangement and for action with which he was endowed; and his prodigious efforts to regain the ground which the disasters of that cam-

paign rescued from his grasp, were only not successful, because no human power could, in a month, create an army of cavalry, nor a word of command, give recruits the discipline of veterans. In the history of war, it is, assuredly, only Hannibal who can be compared with him: and certainly, when we reflect upon the yet greater difficulties of the Carthaginian's position—the much longer time which he maintained the unequal contest—still more, when we consider that his enemies have alone recorded his story, while Napoleon has been his own annalist—justice seems to require that the modern should yield to the ancient commander.

But Napoleon's genius was not confined to war: he possessed a large capacity also for civil affairs. He saw as clearly and as quickly determined on his course, in government as in the field. His public works, and his political reformatations, especially his code of laws, are monuments of his wisdom and his vigour, more imperishable, as time has already proved, and as himself proudly foretold, than all his victories. His civil courage was more brilliant than his own, or most other men's valour in the field. How ordinary a bravery it was that blazed forth at Lodi, when he headed his wavering columns across the bridge swept by the field of Austrian artillery, compared with the undaunted and sublime courage that carried him from Cannes to Paris with a handful of men, and fired his bosom with the desire, and sustained it with the confidence, of overthrowing a dynasty, and overwhelming an empire by the terror of his name! .

Nor were his endowments merely those of the statesman and the warrior. If he was not like Cæsar, a consummate orator, he yet knew men so thoroughly, and especially Frenchmen, whom he had most nearly studied, that he possessed the faculty of addressing them in strains of singular eloquence,—an eloquence peculiar to himself. It is not more certain that he is the greatest soldier that France ever produced, than it is certain that his place is high amongst her greatest writers, as far as composition or diction is concerned. Some of his bulletins are models for the purpose which

they were intended to serve; his address to the soldiers of his old guard at Fontainebleau, is a masterpiece of dignified and pathetic composition; his speech during the hundred days, at the Champ de Mars, beginning, "General consul, Empereur, je tiens tout du peuple," is to be placed amongst the most perfect pieces of simple and majestic eloquence. These things are not the less true, for being seldom or never remarked.

But with these great qualities of the will—the highest courage, the most easy formation of his resolutions, the most steadfast adherence to his purpose, the entire devotion to his object of all his energies—and with the equally shining faculties of the understanding, by which that firm will worked—the clearest and quickest apprehension, the power of intense application, the capacity of complete abstraction from all interrupting ideas, the complete and most instantaneous circumspection of all difficulties, whether on one side, or even providently seen in prospect, the intuitive knowledge of men, and power of mind and tongue to mould their will to his purpose—with these qualities, which form the character held greatest by vulgar minds, the panegyric of Napoleon must close. HE WAS A CONQUEROR;—HE WAS A TYRANT. To gratify his ambition—to slake his thirst of power—to weary a lust of dominion which no conquests could satiate—he trampled on liberty when his hand might have raised her to a secure place; and he wrapped the world in flames, which the blood of millions alone could quench. By those passions, a mind not originally unkindly, was perverted and deformed, till human misery ceased to move it, and honesty, and truth, and pity, the duties we owe to God and man, had departed from one thus given to a single and a selfish pursuit. "*Tantas animi virtutes ingentia vitia æquabant; inhumana crudelitas; perfidia plusquam Punica; nihil veri,*

* The kindness of his nature will be denied by some; the inhuman cruelty by others; but both are correctly true. There is extant, a letter which we have seen, full of the tenderest affection towards his favourite brother, to whom it was addressed, when about to be separated from him, long after he had entered on public life. It is in parts blotted with his tears, evidently shed before the ink was dry.

nihil sancti, nullus Deum metus, nullum jusjurandum, nulla religio."* The death of Enghien, the cruel sufferings of Wright, the mysterious end of Pichegru, the punishment of Palm, the tortures of Toussaint,† have all been dwelt upon as the spots on his fame; because the fortunes of individuals presenting a more definite object to the mind, strike our imaginations, and rouse our feelings more than wretchedness in larger masses, less distinctly perceived. But to the eye of calm reflection, the declaration of an unjustifiable war, or the persisting in it a day longer than is necessary, presents a more grievous object of contemplation, implies a disposition more pernicious to the world, and calls down a reprobation far more severe.

How grateful the relief which the friend of mankind, the lover of virtue, experiences, when turning from the contemplation of such a character, his eye rests upon the greatest man of our own or of any age;—the only one upon whom an epithet so thoughtlessly lavished by men to foster the crimes of their worst enemies, may be innocently and justly bestowed! In Washington we truly behold a marvellous contrast to almost every one of the endowments and the vices which we have been contemplating; and which are so well fitted to excite a mingled admiration, and sorrow, and abhorrence. With none of that brilliant genius which dazzles ordinary minds; with not even any remarkable quickness of apprehension; with knowledge less than almost all

As for cruelty, they only can depy it, who think it is more cruel for a man to witness torments which he has ordered, or to commit butchery with his own hand, than to give the command which must consign thousands to agony and death. If Napoleon had been called upon to witness, or with his own hand to inflict such misery, he would have paused at first—because physical repugnance would have prevailed over mental callousness. But how many minutes' reflection would it have taken to deaden the pain, and make him execute his own purpose?

* Liv. xxi.

† It is a gross error to charge him with the poisoning of his sick in Egypt; and his massacre of the prisoners of Jaffa, is a very controverted matter. But we fear the early anecdote of his ordering an attack, with no other object than to gratify his mistress, when a young officer of artillery, rests upon undeniable authority; and if so, it is to be placed amongst his worst crimes.

persons in the middle ranks, and many well educated of the humbler classes possess; this eminent person is presented to our observation clothed in attributes as modest, as unpretending, as little calculated to strike or to astonish, as if he had passed unknown through some secluded region of private life. But he had a judgment sure and sound; a steadiness of mind which never suffered any passion, or even any feeling to ruffle its calm; a strength of understanding which worked rather than forced its way through all obstacles,—removing or avoiding rather than overleaping them. His courage, whether in battle or in council, was as perfect as might be expected from this pure and steady temper of soul. A perfectly just man, with a thoroughly firm resolution never to be misled by others, any more than by others overawed; never to be seduced or betrayed, or hurried away by his own weakness or self-delusions, any more than by other men's art; nor even to be disheartened by the most complicated difficulties, any more than to be spoiled on the giddy heights of fortune—such was this great man—whether we regard him sustaining alone the whole weight of campaigns, all but desperate, or gloriously terminating a just warfare by his resources and his courage—presiding over the jarring elements of his political council, alike deaf to the storms of all extremes—or directing the formation of a new government for a great people, the first time that so vast an experiment had ever been tried by man—or finally retiring from the supreme power to which his virtue had raised him over the nation he had created, and whose destinies he had guided as long as his aid was required—retiring with the veneration of all parties, of all nations, of all mankind, in order that the rights of men might be conserved, and that his example never might be appealed to by vulgar tyrants. This is the consummate glory of the great American; a triumphant warrior where the most sanguine had a right to despair; a successful ruler in all the difficulties of a course wholly untried; but a warrior, whose sword only left its sheath when the first law of our nature commanded it to be drawn; and a ruler who, having tasted of supreme

power, gently and unostentatiously desired that the cup might pass from him, nor would suffer more to wet his lips than the most solemn and sacred duty to his country and his God required !

To his latest breath did this great patriot maintain the noble character of a captain the patron of peace, and a statesman the friend of Justice. Dying, he bequeathed to his heirs the sword which he had worn in the war for liberty, charging them "never to take it from the scabbard but in self-defence, or in defence of their country and her freedom ; and commanding them, that when it should thus be drawn, they should never sheathe it nor ever give it up, but prefer falling with it in their hands to the relinquishment thereof"—words, the majesty and simple eloquence of which are not surpassed in the oratory of Athens and Rome. It will be the duty of the historian and the sage in all ages to omit no occasion of commemorating this illustrious man ; and until time shall be no more will a test of the progress which our race has made in wisdom and in virtue be derived from the veneration paid to the immortal name of Washington !

CHATHAM'S CORRESPONDENCE.*

[From the *Edinburgh Review*.]

THERE is hardly any man in modern times, with the exception, perhaps, of Lord Somers, who fills so large a space in our history, and of whom we know so little as Lord Chatham; and yet he is the person to whom every one would at once point, if desired to name the greatest statesman and orator that this country ever produced. Of Lord Somers, indeed, we can scarcely be said to know any thing at all. That he was a person of unimpeachable integrity, a judge of great capacity and learning, a firm friend of liberty, but a cautious and safe counsellor in most difficult emergencies, all are ready to acknowledge. But the authority which he possessed among his contemporaries, the influence which his sound and practical wisdom exercised over their proceedings, the services which he was thus enabled to render in steering the constitution safe through the most trying times, and saving us from arbitrary power without paying the price of our liberties in anarchy and blood-shed; nay, conducting the whole violent proceedings of a revolution in all the deliberation, and almost in the forms of an ordinary legal proceeding—have surrounded his name with a mild yet

* Correspondence of William Pitt, Earl of Chatham. Edited by the executors of his son, John Earl of Chatham, and published from the original manuscripts in their possession.

imperishable glory, which, in the contrast of our dark ignorance respecting all the particulars and details of his life, gives the figure something altogether mysterious and ideal. It is now unfortunately too late, by supplying this information, to fill up the outline which the meager records of the times have left us. But it is singular how much of Lord Chatham, who flourished within the memory of the present generation, still rests upon vague tradition. As a statesman, indeed, he is known to us by the events which history has recorded to have happened under his administration. Yet even of his share in bringing these about, little has been preserved of detail. So, fragments of his speeches have been handed down to us, but these bear so very small a proportion to the prodigious fame which his eloquence has left behind it, that far more has manifestly been lost than what has reached us; while of his written compositions but little has hitherto been given to the world.

The imperfect state of parliamentary reporting is the great cause of this blank. From the time of his entering the House of Commons to that of his quitting it, the privileges of parliament almost wholly precluded the possibility of regular and full accounts of debates being communicated to the public. At one period they were given under feigned names, as if held in the Senate of Rome, by the ancient orators and statesmen; at another they were conveyed under the initials only of the names borne by the real speakers. Even when, somewhat later, these disguises were thrown aside, the speeches were composed by persons who had not been present at the debates, but gleaned a few heads of each speaker's topics from some one who had heard them; and the fullest and most authentic of all the accounts of those times are merely the meager outline of the subjects touched upon, preserved in the diaries or correspondence of some contemporary politicians, and presenting not even an approximation to the execution of the orators. Thus many of Lord Chatham's earlier speeches in the House of Commons, as now preserved, were avowedly the composition of Dr. Johnson—

whose measured 'style, formal periods, balanced antitheses, and total want of pure racy English, betray their author at every step—while each debater was made to speak exactly in the same manner. For some years after he ceased to report, or rather to manufacture, that is, from 1751 downwards, a Dr. Gordon furnished the newspapers with reports, consisting of much more accurate accounts of what had passed in debate, but without any pretence to give more than the mere substance of the several speeches. The debates upon the American Stamp Act, in 1764, are the first that can be said to have been preserved at all,—through the happy accident of Lord Charlemont, assisted by Sir Robert Deane, taking an extraordinary interest in the question as bearing upon the grievances of Ireland; and accordingly they have handed down to us some notes, from internal evidence plainly authentic, of Lord Chatham's celebrated speeches upon that great question. A few remains of his great displays in the House of Lords have, in like manner, been preserved, chiefly in the two speeches reported by Mr. Hugh Boyd: the second of which, the most celebrated of all, upon the employment of the Indians in the American war, we have reason to believe was revised and corrected by Lord Chatham himself; and if so, it was certainly the only one that ever received such revision. If any one will only compare the extreme slenderness of these grounds upon which to estimate a speaker's claims to renown, or judge of the characteristics of his eloquence, with the ample means which we have of studying the merits of almost all the ancient orators, and examining their distinguishing qualities, he will be sensible how much any idea which we can form of Lord Chatham's oratory must rest upon tradition;—that is, upon the accounts left by contemporary writers of its effects; and how little we are enabled to judge for ourselves by examining the specimens that remain of his composition. It seems little short of presumption, after this statement, to attempt including his character as an orator in the sketch which we shall give of this great man. But the testimony of contemporaries may so far be

helped by what remains of the oratory itself, as to make some faint conception attainable of that eloquence which, for effect, at least, has surpassed any known in modern times.

The first place among the great qualities which distinguished Lord Chatham, is unquestionably due to firmness of purpose, resolute determination in the pursuit of his objects. This was the characteristic of the younger Brutus, as he said, who had spared his life to fall by his hand—*Quicquid vult, id valde vult*; and, although extremely apt to be shown in excess, it must be admitted to be the foundation of all true greatness of character. Every thing, however, depends upon the endowments in whose company it is found; and in Lord Chatham these were of a very high order. The quickness with which he could ascertain his object, and discover his road to it, was fully commensurate with his perseverance and his boldness in pursuing it; the firmness of grasp with which he held his advantage was fully equalled by the rapidity of the glance with which he discovered it. Add to this, a mind eminently fertile in resources—a courage which nothing could daunt in the choice of his means—a resolution equally indomitable in their application—a genius, in short, original and daring, which bounded over the petty obstacles raised by ordinary men,—their squeamishness, and their precedents, and their forms, and their regularities, and forced away its path through the entanglements of this base undergrowth to the worthy object ever in his view, the prosperity and the renown of his country. Far superior to the paltry objects of a grovelling ambition, and regardless alike of party and of personal considerations, he constantly set before his eyes the highest duty of a public man, to farther the interests of his species. In pursuing his course towards the goal, he disregarded alike the frowns of power and the gales of popular applause—exposed himself undaunted to the vengeance of the court, while he battled against its corruptions, and confronted, unabashed, the rudest shocks of public indignation, while he resisted the dictates of pernicious agitators—and could conscientiously

exclaim, with an illustrious statesman of antiquity,—
“Ego hoc animo semper fui ut invidiam virtute partam, gloriam non invidiam putarem!”

Nothing could be more entangled than the foreign policy of this country at the time when he took the supreme direction of her affairs; nothing could be more disastrous than the aspect of her fortunes in every quarter of the globe. With a single ally in Europe, the King of Prussia, and him beset by a combination of all the continental powers in unnatural union to effect his destruction; with an army of insignificant amount, and commanded by men only desirous of grasping at the emoluments, without doing the duties, or incurring the risks of their profession; with a navy that could hardly keep the sea, and whose chiefs vied with their comrades on shore in earning the character given them by the new minister—of being utterly unfit to be trusted in any enterprise accompanied with “the least appearance of danger;” with a generally prevailing dislike of both services, which at once repressed all desire of joining either, and damped all public spirit in the country, by extinguishing all hope of success, and even all love of glory—it was hardly possible for a nation to be placed in circumstances more inauspicious to military exertions; and yet war raged in every quarter of the world where our dominion extended, while the territories of our only ally, as well as those of our own sovereign in Germany were invaded by France, and her forces by sea and land menaced our shores. In the distant possessions of the crown the same want of enterprise and of spirit prevailed. Armies in the West were paralysed by the inaction of a captain who would hardly take the pains to write a despatch recording the nonentity of his operations; and in the East, while frightful disasters were brought upon our settlements by barbarian powers, the only military capacity that appeared in their defence was the accidental display of genius and valour by a merchant’s clerk, who thus raised himself to celebrity.* In this forlorn state of affairs, rendering it as impossible

* Mr. Clive, afterwards Lord Clive.

to think of peace, as it seemed hopeless to continue the yet inevitable war, the base and sordid views of politicians kept pace with the mean spirit of the military caste; and parties were split or united, not upon any difference or agreement of public principles, but upon mere questions of patronage and share in the public spoil, while all seemed alike actuated by one only passion, the thirst alternately of power and of gain.

As soon as Mr. Pitt took the helm, the steadiness of the hand that held it came to be felt in every motion of the vessel. There was no more of wavering counsels, of torpid inaction, of listless expectancy, of abject despondency. His firmness gave confidence, his spirit roused courage, his vigilance secured exertion, in every department under his sway. Each man, from the first lord of the admiralty down to the most humble clerk in the victualling office; each soldier, from the commander-in-chief to the most obscure contractor or commissary—now felt assured that he was acting or indolent under the eye of one who knew his duties and his means as well as his own—and who would very certainly make all defaulters, whether through misfeasance or through nonfeasance, accountable for whatever detriment the commonwealth might sustain at their hands. Over his immediate coadjutors, his influence swiftly obtained an ascendant which it ever after retained uninterrupted. Upon his first proposition for changing the conduct of the war, he stood single among his colleagues, and tendered his resignation should they persist in their dissent; they at once succumbed, and from that hour ceased to have an opinion of their own upon any branch of the public affairs. Nay, so absolutely was he determined to have the control of those measures, of which he knew the responsibility rested upon him alone, that he insisted upon the first lord of the admiralty not having the correspondence of his own department; and no less eminent a naval character than Lord Anson, with his junior lords, were obliged to sign the orders issued by Mr. Pitt, while the writing was covered over from their eyes!

The effects of this change in the whole management of the public business, and in all the plans of the govern-

ment, as well as in their execution, were speedily made manifest to all the world. The German troops were sent home, and a well-regulated militia being established to defend the country, a large disposable force was distributed over the various points whence the enemy might be annoyed. France, attacked on some points, and menaced on others, was compelled to retire from Germany, soon afterwards suffered the most disastrous defeats, and, instead of threatening England and her allies with invasion, had to defend herself against attack, suffering severely in several of her most important naval stations. No less than sixteen islands, and settlements, and fortresses of importance, were taken from her in America and Asia, and Africa, including all her West Indian colonies, except St. Domingo, and all her settlements in the East. The whole important province of Canada was likewise conquered; and the Havannah was taken from Spain. Besides this, the seas were swept clear of the fleets that had so lately been insulting all our colonies, and even all our coasts. Many general actions were fought and gained;—one among them the most decisive that had ever been fought by our navy. Thirty-six sail of the line were taken or destroyed; fifty frigates; forty-five sloops of war. So brilliant a course of uninterrupted success had never, in modern times, attended the arms of any nation carrying on war with other states equal to it in civilization, and nearly a match in power. But it is a more glorious feature in this unexampled administration which history has to record, when it adds, that all public distress had disappeared; all discontent in any quarter, both of the colonies and parent state, had ceased; that no oppression was any where practised, no abuse suffered to prevail; that no encroachments were made upon the rights of the subject, no malversations tolerated in the possessors of power; and that England, for the first time and for the last time, presented the astonishing picture of a nation supporting without murmur a widely extended and costly war, and a people, hitherto torn with conflicting parties, so united in the service of the commonwealth that the voice of faction had ceased in the land, and any

discordant whisper was heard no more. "These" (said the son of his first and most formidable adversary, Walpole, when informing his correspondent abroad, that the session as usual, had ended without any kind of opposition, or even of debate,)—"These are the doings of Mr. Pitt, and they are wondrous in our eyes!"

To genius irregularity is incident, and the greatest genius is often marked by eccentricity, as if it disdained to move in the vulgar orbit. Hence he who is fitted by his nature, and trained by his habits, to be an accomplished "pilot in extremity," and whose inclinations carry him forth to seek the deep when the waves run high, may be found, if not "to steer too near the shore," yet to despise the sunken rocks which they that can only be trusted in calm weather would have more surely avoided. To this rule it cannot be said that Lord Chatham afforded any exception; and although a plot had certainly been formed to eject him from the ministry, leaving the chief control of affairs in the feeble hands of Lord Bute, whose only support was court favour, and whose only talent lay in an expertness at intrigue, yet there can be little doubt that this scheme was only rendered practicable by the hostility which the great minister's unbending habits, his contempt of ordinary men, and his neglect of every day matters, had raised against him among all the creatures both of Downing street and St. James's. In fact, his colleagues, who necessarily felt humbled by his superiority, were needlessly mortified by the constant display of it; and it would have betokened a still higher reach of understanding, as well as a purer fabric of patriotism, if he, whose great capacity threw those subordinates into the shade, and before whose vigour in action they were sufficiently willing to yield, had united a little suavity in his demeanour with his extraordinary powers, nor made it always necessary for them to acknowledge as well as to feel their inferiority. It is certain that the insulting arrangement of the admiralty, to which reference has already been made, while it lowered that department in the public opinion, rendered all connected with him his personal enemies; and, indeed, though

there have, since his days, been prime ministers whom he would never have suffered to sit even as puny lords at his boards, yet were one like himself again to govern the country, the admiralty chief who might be far inferior to Lord Anson, would never submit to the humiliation inflicted upon that gallant and skilful captain. Mr. Pitt's policy seemed formed upon the assumption that either each public functionary was equal to himself in boldness, activity and resource, or that he was to preside over and animate each department in person; and his confidence was such in his own powers, that he reversed the maxim of governing, never to force your way where you can win it; and always disdained to insinuate where he could dash in, or to persuade where he could command. It thus happened that his colleagues were but nominally coadjutors, and though they durst not thwart him, yet rendered no heart-service to aid his schemes. Indeed, it has clearly appeared since his time, that they were chiefly induced to yield him implicit obedience, and leave the undivided direction of all operations in his hands, by the expectation that the failure of what they were wont to sneer at as "Mr. Pitt's visions," would turn the tide of public opinion against him, and prepare his downfall from a height of which they felt that there was no one but himself able to dispossess him.

The true test of a great man—that at least which must determine his place among the highest order of great men—is his having been in advance of his age. This it is which decides whether or not he has carried forward the grand plan of human improvement, has conformed his views, and adapted his conduct, to the existing circumstances of society, or changed those so as to better its condition, has been one of the lights of the world, or only reflected the borrowed rays of former luminaries, and sat in the same shade at the same twilight, or the same dawn with the rest of his generation. Tried by this test, the younger Pitt cannot certainly be said to have lived before his time, or shed upon the age to which he belonged the illumination of a more advanced civilization and more inspired philosophy.

He came far too early into public life, and was too suddenly plunged into the pool of office, to give him time for the study and the reflection which can alone open to any mind, how vigorous soever be its natural constitution, the views of a deep and original wisdom. Accordingly, it would be difficult to glean, from all his measures and all his speeches, any thing like the fruits of inventive genius; or to mark any token of his mind having gone before the very ordinary routine of the day, as if familiar with any ideas that did not pass through the most vulgar understandings. His father's intellect was of a higher order; he had evidently, though without much education, with no science of any kind, yet reflected deeply upon the principles of human action, and well studied the nature of men, and pondered upon the structure of society. His reflections frequently teem with the fruits of such meditations, to which his constantly feeble health perhaps gave rise rather than any natural proneness to contemplative life, from which his taste must have been adverse; for he was eminently a man of action. His appeals to the feelings, and passions were also the result of the same reflective habits, and the acquaintance with the human heart which they had given him. But if we consider his opinions, though liberal and enlightened upon every particular question, they rather may be regarded as felicitous from their adaptation to the actual circumstances in which he was called upon to advise, or to act, than as indicating that he had seen very far into future times, and anticipated the philosophy which farther experience should teach to our more advanced age of the world. To take two examples from the two subjects upon which he had both thought most, and been the most strenuously engaged in dealing with practically as a statesman our relations with France and with America. The old and narrow notions of natural enmity with the one, and natural sovereignty over the other, were the guides of his whole opinions and conduct in these great arguments. To cultivate the relations of peace with our nearest neighbour, as the first of blessings to both nations—each being able to do the other

most good in amity and most harm in hostility—never appears to have entered into the system of policy enlightened by that fiery soul, which could only see glory or even safety in the precarious and transient domination bestowed by a successful war. To become the fast friends of those colonies which we had planted and long retained under our protecting government, and thus both to profit ourselves and them more by suffering them to be as independent as we are—was an idea that certainly could not be said once to have crossed his impetuous and uncompromising mind—for it had often been entertained by him, but only to be rejected with indignation and abhorrence, as if the independence of America were the loss of our national existence. Upon all less important questions, whether touching our continental or our colonial policy, his opinion was to the full as sound, and his views as enlarged as those of any statesman of his age; but it would not be correct to affirm that on those, the cardinal, and therefore the trying points of the day, he was materially in advance of them.

If we turn from the statesman to survey the orator, our examination must be far less satisfactory, because our materials are extremely imperfect from the circumstances already adverted to. There is indeed hardly any eloquence, of ancient or of modern times, of which so little that can be relied on as authentic, has been preserved; unless perhaps that of Pericles, Julius Cæsar and Lord Bolingbroke. Of the actions of the first two we have sufficient records, as we have of Lord Chatham's; of their speeches we have little that can be regarded as genuine; although, by unquestionable tradition, we know that each of them was second only to the greatest orator of their respective countries;* while of Bolingbroke we only know from Dean Swift, that he was the most accomplished speaker of his time; and it

* Thucydides gives three speeches of Pericles, which he may very possibly have in great part composed for him. Sallust's speech of Cæsar is manifestly the writer's own composition; indeed, it is in the exact style of the one he puts into Cato's mouth, that is, in his own style.

is related of Mr. Pitt (the younger) that when the conversation rolled upon lost works, and some said they should prefer restoring the books of Livy, some of Tacitus, and some a Latin tragedy, he at once decided for a speech of Bolingbroke. What we know of his own father's oratory is much more to be gleaned from contemporary panegyrics, and accounts of its effects, than from the scanty, and for the most part doubtful, remains which have reached us.

All accounts, however, concur in representing those effects to have been prodigious. The spirit and vehemence which animated its greater passages—their perfect application to the subject-matter of debate—the appositeness of his invective to the individual assailed—the boldness of the feats which he ventured upon—the grandeur of the ideas which he unfolded—the heart-stirring nature of his appeals—are all confessed by the united testimony of all his contemporaries; and the fragments which remain bear out to a considerable extent such representations; nor are we likely to be misled by those fragments, for the more striking portions were certainly the ones least likely to be either forgotten or fabricated. To these mighty attractions was added the imposing, the animating, the commanding power of a countenance singularly expressive; an eye so piercing that hardly any one could stand its glare; and a manner altogether singularly striking, original and characteristic, notwithstanding a peculiarly defective and even awkward action. Latterly, indeed, his infirmities precluded all action; and he is described as standing in the House of Lords, leaning upon his crutch, and speaking for ten minutes together in an under tone of voice scarcely audible, but raising his notes to their full pitch when he broke out into one of his grand bursts of invective or exclamation. But in his earlier time, his whole manner is represented as having been beyond conception animated and imposing. Indeed the things which he effected by it principally, or at least which nothing but a most striking and commanding tone could have made it possible to attempt, almost exceed belief. Some of these sallies are indeed examples of that approach made to the ludicrous by the

sublime, which has been charged upon him as a prevailing fault, and represented under the name of *Charlatanerie*—a favourite phrase with his adversaries, as it in latter times has been with the ignorant undervaluers of Lord Erskine. It is related that once in the House of Commons he began a speech with the words, "Sugar, Mr. Speaker"—and then observing a smile to prevail in the audience, he paused, looked fiercely around, and with a loud voice, rising in its notes, and swelling into vehement anger, he is said to have pronounced again the word "Sugar!" three times—and having thus quelled the house, and extinguished every appearance of levity or laughter, turned round and disdainfully asked,—“Who will laugh at sugar now?” We have this anecdote upon good traditional authority; that it was believed by those who had the best means of knowing Lord Chatham, is certain; and this of itself shows their sense of the extraordinary powers of his manner, and the reach of his audacity in trusting to those powers.

There can be no doubt that of reasoning—of sustained and close argument—his speeches had but little. His statements were desultory, though striking, perhaps not very distinct, certainly not at all detailed, and as certainly every way inferior to those of his celebrated son. If he did not reason cogently, he assuredly did not compress his matter vigorously. He was any thing rather than a concise or a short speaker; not that his great passages were at all diffuse, or in the least degree loaded with superfluous words; but he was prolix in the whole texture of his discourse, and he was certainly the first who introduced into our senate the practice, adopted in the American war by Mr. Burke, and continued by others, of long speeches—speeches of two and three hours, by which oratory has gained little, and business less. His discourse, was, however, fully informed with matter—his allusions to analogous subjects, and his reference to the history of past events, were frequent—his expression of his own opinions was copious and free, and stood very generally in the place of any elaborate reasoning in their support. A noble statement of enlarged views, a generous avowal of dignified sentiments,

a manly and somewhat severe contempt for all petty or mean views—whether their baseness proceeded from narrow understanding or from corrupt bias—always pervaded his whole discourse; and more than any other orator since Demosthenes, he was distinguished by the nobleness of feeling with which he regarded, and the amplitude of survey which he cast upon the subject-matters of debate. His invective was unsparing and hard to be endured although he was a less eminent master of sarcasm than his son, and rather overwhelmed his antagonist with the burst of words and vehement indignation, than wounded him by the edge of ridicule, or tortured him with the gall of bitter scorn, or fixed his arrow in the wound by the barb of epigram. These things seemed, as it were, to betoken too much labour and too much art—more labour than was consistent with absolute scorn—more art than could stand with heartfelt rage, or entire contempt inspired by the occasion, at the moment and on the spot. But his great passages, those by which he has come down to us, those which gave his eloquence its peculiar character, and to which its dazzling success was owing, were as sudden and unexpected as they were natural. Every one was taken by surprise when they rolled forth—every one felt them to be so natural, that he could hardly understand why he had not thought of them himself although into no one's imagination had they ever entered. If the quality of being natural without being obvious is a pretty correct description of felicitous expression, or what is called fine writing, it is a yet more accurate representation of fine passages, or felicitous *hits* in speaking. In these all popular assemblies take boundless delight; by these above all others are the minds of an audience at pleasure moved or controlled. They form the grand charm of Lord Chatham's oratory; they were the distinguishing excellence of his great predecessor, and gave him at will to wield the fierce democracy of Athens, and to fulminate over Greece.

It was the sagacious remark of one of the most acute of critics, as well as historical inquirers, that criticism never would be of any value until critics cited innume-

rable examples. In sketching the character of Lord Chatham's oratory this becomes the more necessary, that so few now living can have any recollection of it, and that all our knowledge of its peculiar nature rests upon a few scattered fragments. There is, however, some security for our deducing from these a correct notion of it, because they certainly, according to all accounts, were the portions of his discourse which produced the most extraordinary effect, on which its fame rests, and by which its quality is to be ascertained. A few of these may, therefore, be referred to in closing the present imperfect outline of this great man.

His remark on confidence, when it was asked by the ministry 1766, for whom he had some forbearance rather than any great respect, is well known. He said their characters were fair enough, and he was always glad to see such persons engaged in the public service; but turning to them with a smile, very courteous, but not very respectful, he said—"Confide in you! Oh no—you must pardon me, gentlemen—*youth* is the season of credulity—confidence is a plant of slow growth in an aged bosom."

Some one having spoken of "the obstinacy of America," said that she was almost in open rebellion." Mr. Pitt exclaimed, "I rejoice that America has resisted. Three millions of people so dead to all the feelings of liberty as voluntarily to let themselves be made slaves, would have been fit instruments to make slaves of all the rest!" Then speaking of the attempt to keep her down—"In a just cause of quarrel you may crush America to atoms; but in this crying injustice!" (Stamp Act) —"I am one who will lift up my hands against it—In such a cause even your success would be hazardous. America, if she fell, would fall like a strong man; she would embrace the pillars of the state and pull down the constitution along with her. Is this your boasted peace to sheathe the sword, not in its scabbard, but in the bowels of your countrymen?" It was in this debate that Mr. Burke first spoke, and Mr. Pitt praised his speech in very flattering terms.

"Those iron Barons (for so I may call them when

compared with the silken Barons of modern days) were the guardians of the people; and three words of their barbarous Latin, *nullus liber homo*, are worth all the classics. Yet their virtues were never tried in a question so important as this." (Pretension of privilege in the House of Commons)—"A breach is made in the constitution—the battlements are dismantled—the citadel is open to the first invader—the walls totter—the place is no longer tenable—what then remains for us but to stand foremost in the breach, to repair it, or to perish in it? Unlimited power corrupts the possessor; and this I know, that where law ends, there tyranny begins."

In reference to the same subject, the expulsion of Mr. Wilkes, he exclaimed in a subsequent debate—"The constitution at this moment stands violated. If the breach be effectually repaired the people will return to tranquillity of themselves. If not, let discord reign for ever! I know to what point my language will appear directed. But I have the principles of an Englishman, and I utter them without fear or reserve. Rather than the constitution should be tamely given up, and our birthright be surrendered to a despotic minister, I hope my lords, old as I am, that I shall see the question brought to an issue, and fairly tried between the people and the government." Again he said—"Magna Charta—the petition of right—the bill of rights—form the Bible of the English constitution. Had some of the king's unhappy predecessors trusted less to the commentary of their advisers, and been better read in the text itself, the glorious revolution might have remained only possible in theory, and their fate would not now have stood upon record, a formidable example to all their successors."—"No man more than I, respects the just authority of the House of Commons—no man would go farther to defend it. But beyond the line of the constitution, like every exercise of arbitrary power, it becomes illegal, threatening tyranny to the people, destruction to the state. Power without right is the most detestable object that can be offered to the human imagination; it is not only pernicious to those whom it subjects, but works its own

destruction. *Rēs detestabilis et caduca*. Under pretence of declaring law, the commons have made a law, a law for their own case, and have united in the same persons the offices of legislator and party and judge."

These fine passages, conveying sentiments so noble and so wise, may be read with advantage by the present House of Commons, when it shall again be called on to resist the judges of the land, and to break its laws, by opening a shop for the sale of libels.

His character—drawn, he says, from long experience—of the Spaniards, the high-minded chivalrous Castilians, we believe to be as just as it is severe. Speaking of the affair of Faulkland's Island, he said—"They are as mean and crafty, as they are insolent and proud. I never yet met with an instance of candour or dignity in their proceedings; nothing but low cunning, artifice, and trick. I was compelled to talk to them in a peremptory language. I submitted my advice for an immediate war to a trembling council. You all know the consequences of its being rejected." The speech from the throne had stated that the Spanish government had disowned the act of its officer. Lord Chatham said—"There never was a more odious, a more infamous falsehood imposed on a great nation. It degrades the king, it insults the parliament. His majesty has been advised to affirm an absolute falsehood. My lords, I beg your attention, and I hope I shall be understood when I repeat, that it is an absolute, a palpable falsehood. The King of Spain disowns the thief, while he leaves him unpunished, and profits by his theft. In vulgar English, he is the receiver of stolen goods, and should be treated accordingly." How would all the country, at least all the canting portion of it, resound with the cry of—"coarse! vulgar! brutal!"—if such epithets and such comparisons as these were used in any debate now-a-days, whether among the "silken barons," or the "squeamish commons of our time!"

In 1775, he made a most brilliant speech on the war. Speaking of General Gage's inactivity, he said it could not be blamed; it was inevitable. "But what a miserable condition," he exclaimed, "is ours, where dis-

grace is prudence, and where it is necessary to be contemptible! You must repeal these acts" (he said, alluding to the Boston port, and Massachusetts Bay Bills) "and you will repeal them. I pledge myself for it, that you will repeal them. I stake my reputation on it. I will consent to be taken for an idiot if they are not finally repealed." Every one knows how true this prophecy proved. The concluding sentence of the speech has been often cited: "If the ministers persevere in misleading the king, I will not say that they can alienate the affections of his subjects from his crown; but I will affirm, that they will make the crown not worth his wearing. I will not say that the king is betrayed; but I will pronounce that the kingdom is undone."

Again, in 1777, after describing the course of the war, and "the traffic and barter driven with every little pitiful German prince, that sells his subjects to the shambles of a foreign country,"—he adds—"The mercenary aid on which you rely, irritates, to an incurable resentment, the minds of your enemies, whom you overrun with the sordid sons of rapine and of plunder, devoting them and their possessions to the rapacity of hireling cruelty! If I were an American, as I am an Englishman, while a foreign troop was landed in my country, I never would lay down my arms—never! never! never!"—Such language, used in the modern days of ultra loyalty and extreme decorum, would call down upon his head who employed it, the charge of encouraging rebels, and partaking as an accomplice in their treasons.

It was upon this memorable occasion that he made the famous reply to Lord Suffolk, who had said, in reference to employing the Indians, that "we were justified in using all the means which God and nature had put into our hands." The circumstance of Lord Chatham having himself revised this speech, induces us to insert it here at length.

"I am astonished," exclaimed Lord Chatham, as he rose—"shocked to hear such principles confessed, to

hear them avowed, in this house, or in this country—principles equally unconstitutional, inhuman, and unchristian.

“My lords, I did not intend to have trespassed again on your attention, but I cannot repress my indignation. I feel myself impelled by every duty. My lords, we are called upon as members of this house, as men, as Christian men, to protest against such notions, standing near the throne, polluting the ear of his majesty. *That God and nature put into our hands!*—I know not what idea that lord may entertain of God and nature, but I know that such abominable principles are equally abhorrent to religion and humanity. What! attribute the sacred sanction of God and nature to the massacres of the Indian scalping-knife, to the cannibal savage, torturing, murdering, roasting and eating—literally, my lords, eating the mangled victims of his barbarous battles! Such horrible notions shock every precept of religion, divine and natural, and every generous feeling of humanity; and, my lords, they shock every sentiment of honour; they shock me, as a lover of honourable war, and a detester of murderous barbarity.

“These abominable principles, and this more abominable avowal of them, demand most decisive indignation. I call upon that right reverend bench, those holy ministers of the Gospel, and pious pastors of the church: I conjure them to join in the holy work, and to vindicate the religion of their God. I appeal to the wisdom and the law of this learned bench, to defend and support the justice of their country. I call upon the bishops to interpose the unsullied sanctity of their lawn, upon the learned judges to interpose the purity of their ermine, to save us from this pollution. I call upon the honour of your lordships to reverence the dignity of your ancestors, and to maintain your own. I call upon the spirit and humanity of my country to vindicate the national character. I invoke the genius of the constitution. From the tapestry that adorns these walls, the immortal ancestor of this noble lord, frowns with indignation at **THE DISGRACE OF HIS COUNTRY!**—In vain he led your victorious fleets against the boasted Armada of Spain.

—in vain he defended and established the honour, the liberties, the religion, the protestant religion of his country, against the arbitrary cruelties of popery and the inquisition, if these more than popish cruelties and inquisitorial practices are let loose amongst us, to turn forth into our settlements, among our ancient connexions, friends and relations, the merciless cannibal, thirsting for the blood of man, woman, and child—to send forth the infidel savage—against whom? Against your protestant brethren—to lay waste their country, to desolate their dwellings, and extirpate their race and name with these horrible hell-hounds of savage war—*hell-hounds, I say, of savage war*. Spain armed herself with blood-hounds, to extirpate the wretched natives of America, and we improve on the inhuman example of even Spanish cruelty; we turn loose these savage hell-hounds against our brethren and countrymen in America, of the same language, laws, liberties, and religion, endeared to us by every tie that should sanctify humanity. My lords, this awful subject, so important to our honour, our constitution, and our religion, demands the most solemn and effectual inquiry: and I again call upon your lordships, and the united powers of the state, to examine it thoroughly and decisively, and to stamp upon it an indelible stigma of the public abhorrence. And I again implore those holy prelates of our religion to do away these iniquities from among us; let them perform a lustration—let them purify this house and this country from this sin.

“My lords, I am old and weak, and at present unable to say more; but my feelings and my indignation were too strong to have said less. I could not have slept this night in my bed, or have reposed my head on my pillow, without giving this vent to my eternal abhorrence of such repugnant and enormous principles.”

There are other celebrated passages of his speeches in all men's mouths. His indignant and contemptuous answer to the minister's boast of driving the Americans before the army—“I might as well think of driving them before me with this crutch!”—is well known.

Perhaps the finest of all, is his allusion to the maxim of English law, that every man's house is his castle. "The poorest man, may, in his cottage, bid defiance to all the forces of the crown. It may be frail—its roof may shake—the wind may blow through it—the storm may enter—the rain may enter—but the King of England cannot enter!—all his power dares not cross the threshold of the ruined tenement!"

These examples, we think, will serve to convey a pretty accurate idea of the peculiar vein of eloquence which distinguished this great man's speeches. It was of the very highest order; vehement, fiery, close to the subject, concise, occasionally eminently, sometimes boldly figurative: it was original, and surprising, yet quite natural. To call it argumentative, would be an abuse of terms; but it had always a sufficient foundation of reason to avoid any appearance of inconsistency, or error, or wandering from the point. So the greatest passages in the Greek orations, were very far from being such as could stand the test of close examination in regard to their argument. Yet would it be hypercritical indeed, to object that Demosthenes, in the most celebrated burst of all ancient eloquence, argues for his policy being rewarded although it led to defeat, on the ground of public honours having been bestowed upon those who fell in gaining five great victories.

Some have compared Mr. Fox's eloquence to that of Demosthenes; but it resembled Lord Chatham's just as much, if not more. It was incomparably more argumentative than either the Greek or the English orator's; neither of whom carried on chains of close reasoning as he did, though both kept close to their subject. It was, however, exceedingly the reverse of the Attic oration, either in method, in diction, or in conciseness. It had nothing like arrangement of any kind. Except in the more vehement passages, its diction was perhaps as slovenly, certainly as careless as possible,—betokening indeed a contempt of all accurate composition. It was diffused in the highest degree, and abounded in repetitions. While the Greek was concise, almost to being *jejune*, the Englishman was diffuse, almost to being

prolix. How the notion of comparing the two together ever could have prevailed, seems unaccountable, unless it be that men have supposed them alike because they were both vehement, and both kept the subject in view rather than run after ornament. But that the most elaborate and artificial compositions in the world should have been likened to the most careless, and natural, and unprepared that ever were delivered in public, would seem wholly incredible if it were not true. The bursts of Mr. Fox, however, though less tersely and concisely composed, certainly have some resemblance to Lord Chatham's—only that they betray far less fancy—and however vehement and fiery, are incomparably less bold. Mr. Pitt's oratory, though admirably suited to its purpose, and as perfect a business kind of speaking as ever was heard, certainly resembled none of the three others who have been named. In point of genius, unless perhaps for sarcasm, he was greatly their inferior; although, from the unbroken fluency of his appropriate language, and the power of a most sonorous voice, he produced the most prodigious effects.

It remains to speak of Lord Chatham as a private man, and he appears to have been in all respects exemplary and amiable. His disposition was exceedingly affectionate. The pride, bordering upon insolence, in which he showed himself encased to the world, fell naturally from him, and without any effort to put it off, as he crossed the threshold of his own door. To all his family he was simple, kindly, and gentle. His pursuits were of a nature that showed how much he loved to unbend himself. He delighted in poetry and other light reading; was fond of music; loved the country; took peculiar pleasure in gardening; and had even an extremely happy taste in laying out grounds. His early education appears to have been farther prosecuted afterwards; and he was familiar with the Latin classics, although there is no reason to believe that he had much acquaintance with the Greek. In all our own classical writers he was well versed; and his time was much given to reading them. A correspondence with his nephew, which Lord Grenville published about

thirty years ago, showed how simple and classical his tastes were, how affectionate his feelings, and how strong his sense of both moral and religious duty. These letters are reprinted in the present work, because the answers have since been recovered; but it contains a great body of other letters both to and from him. Amongst the letters, are to be found constant tokens of his amiable disposition.

We regard this work, indeed, as one of the greatest value; and hold the editors (of whom Mr. Taylor,* his great-grandson and personal representative, is one) to have formed a wise resolution, both as to their own duty, and the best service they could render at once to the memory of their illustrious ancestor, and to the public interests, by determining to keep back no part of the precious documents intrusted to their care. The first volume alone is completed, and lies before us. We understand that four or five more are to follow without much delay. The letters contained in the present volume, though, of course, less interesting than those which may be expected in the sequel, contain nevertheless, important matter of various kinds, both in Lord Chatham's own letters, and in those of his correspondents. They throw, also, considerable light upon that firm and determined mind of which we have spoken in the very inadequate attempt to portray his character. The earliest date is 1741, when he was only twenty-eight years of age; and they come down to the year 1759. The editor, Mr. Wright, has given full notes, containing exactly the kind of information which the perusal of the letters would set the reader upon seeking, and which he could not find without turning over many books. Nothing, therefore, can be more convenient than the form of the publication. We may somewhat regret its appearing in single volumes; we shall accordingly expect the continuation with impatience; but in the meanwhile our readers have a right to be made

* This respectable gentleman is grandson of the late Lord Stanhope, being the son of his daughter, Lady Lucy, by his first wife, who was the niece of Mr. Pitt, and the grand-daughter of Lord Chatham.

acquainted with some of the contents of the present volume.

There is much allowance to be made for the overdone politeness, and something for the very aristocratic habits of the last age, in observing the intercourse of private society, and the forms, at least, in which it was carried on. This probably, rather than any real humility of disposition, must account for such a style as the following, and similar letters to the Duke of Newcastle; a personage whose wealth and rank, and accidental place at the head of the Whig party, could alone command any portion of respect; for his talents were of the lowest description, and his political life was a mere scene of party-jobbing from first to last.

“ Bath, April 4, 1754. ”

“ My Lord duke—I received the honour of your grace’s letter of the 2d instant yesterday evening, and I take this opportunity of the post, to return you my sincerest, humblest thanks, for the great condescension and very kind manner in which it is written. I should make a very ill return to your grace’s goodness, if I were to go far back into the disagreeable subject that has occasioned you the trouble of writing a long and very obliging letter. Amidst all your business, I should be ashamed to tease your grace’s good-nature with much repetition of an uneasy subject, and necessarily so stuffed with impertinent egotisms. Whatever my sensations are and must be of my situation, it is sufficient that I have once openly exposed them to your view, as I thought I owed it to your grace and to myself to do.

“ As to the chancellor of the exchequer, I hope your grace does not think me filled with so impertinent a vanity, as to imagine ’t any disparagement to myself to serve under your grace, as the head of the treasury. But, my lord, had I been proposed for that honour, and the king reconciled to the thought of me, my honour would have been saved, and I should have declined it

with pleasure in favour of Mr. Legge, from considerations of true regard for his majesty's service. My health at the best is too unsettled, &c. Very few have been the advantages and honours of my life; but among the first of them, I shall ever esteem the honour of your grace's favourable opinion. You have tried me, and have not found me deceive you; to this your grace's favourable opinion and to your protection I recommend myself, and hope that some retreat neither dishonourable nor disagreeable may (when it is practicable) be opened to me."

A like tone, when employed towards Lord Hardwicke, cannot so much surprise any one; although in these days, even towards such a person, the following would be deemed a somewhat exaggerated expression of respect from a person in the commanding position then occupied by Mr. Pitt.

" Bath, April 6, 1754.

" My lord—no man ever felt an honour more deeply, than I do that of your lordship's letter. Your great goodness in taking the trouble to write, amidst your perpetual and important business, and the very condescending and infinitely obliging terms, in which your lordship is pleased to express yourself, could not fail to make impressions of the most sensible kind. I am not only unable to find words to convey my gratitude; but I am much more distressed to find any means of deserving the smallest part of your lordship's very kind attention and indulgence to a sensibility carried, perhaps, beyond what the cause will justify, in the eye of superior and true wisdom. I venerate so sincerely that judgment, that I shall have the additional unhappiness of standing self-condemned, if my reasons, already laid before your lordship continue to appear insufficient to determine me to inaction.

" I am now to ask a thousand most humble pardons of your lordship for the length, and, I fear, still more

for the matter of this letter. If I am not quite unreasonable, your lordship's equity and candour will acquit me; if I am so unfortunate as to appear otherwise, where it is my ambition not to be thought wrong, I hope your lordship's generosity and humanity will, notwithstanding, pardon failings that flow from no ill principle, and that never can shake my unalterable wishes for the quiet and security of government."

This language, however, is ascribable to the fashion of the day; it is that of respect; it may be little more than courtesy. No other feelings are expressed, and no affection is pretended. As much cannot be said of Lord Bute's letters to Lord Chatham; these are in a somewhat fulsome strain of tenderness not altogether usual among statesmen.

Saturday, March 2, 1757.

.. My dearest Friend,

"I cannot think of interrupting your airing this fine day; yet must pour out my heart in the sincerest congratulations upon the success of your great and most able conduct yesterday.* I have for some time past seen many gloomy and desponding worthy men. With these I have ever insisted, that measures once taken, maturely weighed, and thought the best, the safest, and most generous, were to be pursued, let the inconsistent gale of popular favour blow which way it will. I know how much we think alike; and you have acted on this, as on all other occasions, the part of Horace's "*firmum et tenacem propositi virum*." You feel the inward satisfaction arising from it, and have met with the most deserved applause; but had opinions, (through suspicion, envy, or the arts of party) taken another turn, I am certain the firm support and countenance of him who is some day to reap the fruits

* In the House of Commons, on the debate upon the king's message for granting £200,000 for an army of observation, and enabling his majesty to fulfil his engagements with the King of Prussia.

of my friend's unwearied endeavours for the public safety, would make him perfectly easy under the frowns of prejudiced, deluded, fluctuating men.

"Go on, my dear Pitt: make every bad subject your declared enemy, every honest man your real friend. I, for my part, must desire ever to share with you in both. who am unalterably, your most affectionate friend, and devoted servant."

Again—

"March, 1757.

"My dear friend,

"I enter heartily into the base unworthy manner that you have been treated in. Though no perfidy in that quarter will ever surprise me, yet I own I am amazed at the impudence of the assertion. I regret extremely not having had my share in the tragedy. I confess I am anxious about your situation. It is my noblest, best friend's fortune that is at stake; it is mine, nay, 'tis that of a greater person than either of us—of one who knows, who feels your danger, and still looks upon it as his own. I say, I am anxious, my friend, but that is all; far from desponding, I look on all that happens now as the last efforts of a long, adverse fortune. We have hitherto had the whole chapter of accidents against us; the time must be at hand for better things. Is there a man of the whole opposite party, that would not abandon his colours, to stand as near the Hope of England as we do? Victory is before us; our enemies know it and tremble. Long may you continue, my dear Pitt, in an office that your parts and good heart adorn; may you be found there at that critical minute that, sooner or later, we are sure (if alive) to meet with: this is the hope, nay, the real comfort of him who will ever share your adversities, and rejoice in your happiness. I am, my dearest friend, most affectionately yours," &c.

The "greater person than either of us," was, of course, that very honest and sincere character Frederick, Prince of Wales—a man who, even in those times of falsehood,

in all its ramifications of intrigue and job, stood unrivalled in the prevailing arts of his age.

The following brief letter is not conceived in quite the same style as either of the preceding ones. Lord Exeter had written to complain of his militia regiment being ordered to Bristol, contrary, he said, to an "assurance from Mr. Pitt that they should not." This was the reply:—

"My lord,

"The matter of your lordship's letter surprises me as much as the style and manner of it. I never deceive, nor suffer any man to tell me I have deceived him. I declare upon my honour, I know nothing of the order to march the Rutlandshire militia, if any such be given. I desire therefore to know what your lordship means by presuming to use the expression of being deceived by me. I am your lordship's humble servant,

"W. PITT.

"I delay going out of town till I hear from your lordship."

- Among the most singular pieces contained in this correspondence is the elaborate and very able despatch of Mr. Pitt to Mr. B. Keene, our ambassador at Madrid, instructing him to attempt bringing over Spain from the family compact, and making her take part with this country; especially in recovering Minorca, the importance of which he seems to have rated very high. The part of these instructions which will now strike the English and French reader most, is that in which Mr. Pitt authorizes the ambassador to offer the cession of Gibraltar to Spain. This would, no doubt, be held a
- very impolitic and even a discreditable measure now-a-days; but the circumstances are materially changed since the famous defence of that fortress by Elliot has made the honour of our arms and nation be more or less dependent upon its retention; and we may be well assured that Lord Chatham would have been the last
 - person in the country to counsel such a sacrifice had he lived in the present times. In 1757, his colleagues fully

concurred with him on this point; and they laid before the king a cabinet minute, in which the following passage occurs, and of which a copy was forwarded to the ambassador:—"In this necessary view their lordships most humbly submit their opinion to your majesty's great wisdom—that overtures of a negotiation should be set on foot with that court, in order to engage Spain, if possible, to join their arms to those of your majesty, for the obtaining a just and honourable peace, and mainly for recovering and restoring to the crown of England the most important island of Minorca, with all the forts and fortresses of the same, as well as for re-establishing some solid system in Europe; and inasmuch as it shall be found necessary for the attaining these great and essential ends, to treat with the crown of Spain as an effectual condition therunto, concerning an exchange of Gibraltar for the island of Minorca, with the ports and fortresses thereof, their lordships are most humbly of an unanimous opinion, that the court of Spain should, without loss of time, be sounded with respect to their dispositions thereupon; and if the same should all be found favourable, that the said negotiation should be carried forward and ripened for execution, with all possible despatch and secrecy." It may be added that General Wall, the Spanish prime minister, received this proposal, according to Sir B. Keene's report of his conference, "with cool politeness;" and showed no disposition at all to quit the French alliance.

In the following letter, Lord Bute, then prime courtier, and indeed governor of the young prince, afterwards so well known as George III., thus mentions him to Mr. Pitt:—

"Friday, August 5, 1757.

"My Dearest Friend,

"I heartily thank you for giving me this early notice of this event;* for, terrible as it is, certain knowledge is better than uncertain rumours. I do not know that, in

* The defeat of the Duke of Cumberland by Marshall D'Etrees at Hastenbach, on the 25th of July; in consequence of which the city of Hanover was taken possession of by the French.

my life, I ever felt myself so affected with any foreign transaction. Oh, my dear friend, what dreadful auspices do we begin with! and yet, thank God, I see you in office. If ever the wreck of this crown can be preserved to our amiable young prince, 'tis to your efforts, your abilities, my dear Pitt, that he must owe it. Let what will happen, one thing comforts me: I know you have a soul fit for these rough times; that, instead of sinking under adversity, will rise and grow stronger against it.

"Farewell, my dearest friend. No event shall ever make me cease to be one minute most affectionately, most sincerely, yours," &c., &c.

The following remarkable letter is from the self-same "amiable young prince," when he had nearly ruined his country by his senseless and obstinate bigotry about America. It certainly breathes a spirit the reverse of "amiable." He is writing in answer to Lord North's proposal for putting Mr. Pitt's name in Lord Chatham's pension. The letter is not contained in the work before us; nor has it ever been made public; but we can answer for its perfect authenticity:—"The making Lord Chatham's family suffer for the conduct of their father is not in the least agreeable to my sentiments. But I should choose to know him to be totally unable to appear on the public stage before I agree to any offer of that kind, lest it should be wrongly construed a fear of him; and indeed his political conduct the last winter was so abandoned that he must, in the eyes of the dispassionate, have totally undone all the merit of his former conduct. As to any gratitude to be expected from him or his family, the whole tenor of their lives has shown them void of that most honourable sentiment. But when decrepitude or death puts an end to him as a trumpet of sedition, I shall make no difficulty in placing the second son's name instead of the father's, and making up the pension £3000."

From so unpleasing a picture of the monarch, let us turn to view the great statesman's amiable feelings in

private life, as depicted in the following letter to his wife. It is contained in the present volume.

“ Hayes, Saturday, July 1, 1758.

“ My dear love,

“ I hope this letter will find you safe arrived at Stowe, after a journey which the little rain must have made pleasant. Hayes is as sweet with these showers as it can be without the presence of her who gives to every sweet its best sweetness. The loved babes are delightfully well, and remembered dear mamma over their strawberries; they both looked for her in the prints, and told me “ Mamma gone up there—Stowe Garden.” As the showers seem local, I may suppose my sweet love enjoying them with a fine evening sun, and finding beauties of her acquaintances grown up into higher perfection, and others, before unknown to her and still so to me, accomplishing the total charms.

“ The messenger is just arrived, and no news. Expectation grows every hour into more anxiety—the fate of Louisburgh and of Olmutz probably decided, though the event unknown—the enterprise crowned with success or baffled, at this moment—and indications of a second battle towards the Rhine. I trust, my life, in the same favouring Providence that all will be well, and that this almost degenerate England may learn from the disgrace and ruin it shall have escaped, and the consideration and security it may enjoy, to be more deserving of the blessing.

“ Sister Mary’s letter of yesterday will have carried down the history of Hayes to last night; and the continuator of this day has the happiness to assure my sweetest love of the health of its inhabitants, young and old. The young are so delightfully noisy that I hardly know what I write. My most affectionate compliments to all the congress. Your ever loving husband.”

The short notices which follow are not a little curious.

Dr. Markham, afterwards Archbishop of York, in a letter to the Duchess of Queensberry, solicited her grace

to apply to Mr. Pitt for a consulship, which the doctor says a worthy friend of his much desired. This friend was no less a man than Edmund Burke! "It is time," says Dr. Markham, "I should say who my friend is. His name is Edmund Burke—as a literary man he may possibly be not quite unknown to you. He is the author of a piece which imposed on the world as Lord Bolingbroke's, called, 'The Advantages of Natural Society,' and of a very ingenious book, published last year, called, a 'Treatise on the Sublime and the Beautiful.'"

These melancholy and striking lines—the last that General Wolfe wrote to his patron—were penned only four days before his glorious death: "I am so far recovered as to do business; but my constitution is entirely ruined, without the consolation of having done any considerable service to the state; or without any prospect of it."

The King of Prussia's opinion of Mr. Pitt is given in some very remarkable expressions, in an extract of a letter from Sir A. Mitchell, the British envoy at Berlin:—"A few days before his Prussian majesty left the camp of Schmotseiffen in order to fight the Russians, talking at table of England, he said—'*Il faut avouer que L'Angleterre a été longtemps en travail, et qu'elle a beaucoup soufferte pour produire Monsieur Pitt; mais enfin elle, est accouchée d'un Homme.*'" Such a testimony, from such a prince, crowns you with honour, and fills me with pleasure."

We shall close our extracts with the following letter, which was written by Mr. Pitt to the Prussian monarch, in January, 1759;

“Sire,

“La lettre qui me comble de gloire, et que votre Majesté a daigné me faire de la même main qui fait le salut de l'Europe, m'ayant pénétré de sentiments au dessus de toute expression, il ne me reste qu'à supplier votre Majesté, qu'elle veuille bien per mettre qu'au défaut de paroles, j'aye recours aux foibles efforts d'un zèle inalterable pour ses intérêts, et que j'aspire à rendre ma vie entière l'interprète d'un cœur rempli d'admira-

tion, et profondément touché de la plus vive, et de la plus respectueuse reconnoissance.

“En vous dédiant, Sire, un devouement de la sorte, je ne fais qu’obéir aux volontés du Roi, qui n’exige rien tant de ceux qui ont l’honneur de servir sa Majesté dans ses affaires, que de travailler avec passion à rendre indissolubles les liens d’une union si heureuse entre les deux Cours.

“Agréez, Sire, qu’animé de ces vues je fasse des vœux pour les jours de votre Majesté, et qu’en tremblant, je la suive en idée, dans la carrière d’actions merveilleuses qui se succèdent continuellement, sans cesser, toutefois, d’être prodiges; et que j’ose supplier très humblement votre Majesté, qu’au milieu de tous ses travaux, elle veuille bien songer, un moment, à me continuer la gloire et le bien inestimable de cette protection, qu’elle m’a fait la grace de m’accorder. Je suis, avec le plus profond respect, Sire, de votre Majesté.—Le très humble et très obéissant serviteur,

No notice has been taken in this article of a report very generally prevalent, that this great man, at one period of his life, laboured under a degree of irritation amounting to mental discase. That the evidence of this is drawn from suspicious sources—the remains of his political and even personal antagonists—is certain. But an historical sketch of his character could hardly be exempt from the charge of imperfection, if not of partiality, which should avoid all notice of the subject. That he laboured under some depression of spirits, aggravated, in all probability, by the treatment which he had experienced from inferior minds, devoid of all gratitude for his former services, and all due appreciation of his great capacity, may readily be admitted. It is also the fact, that through repeated attacks of an hereditary gout, to which he was from his early age a martyr, he experienced great irritability during the same period, namely, that of his last Administration. The intrigues of his cabinet, his unhappy differences with George Grenville first, and afterwards with Lord Temple also, his bro-

thers-in-law, together with the admitted severity of his gout during the time in question, will sufficiently explain the reluctance which he showed to engage in business, to attend cabinet meetings, and to present himself at court. The remaining circumstances relied upon,—as his squandering away the ample legacy of Sir William Pynsent, and his impetuous proceedings in carrying on improvements at his Kentish villa, with no regard to expense, and even little attention to the period of the day or night when he required the work to be done,—may all be well accounted for by the known ardour of his disposition; and are truly to be reckoned among the natural ebullitions of the same vehement determination of purpose which, exerted upon greater things, formed the leading feature of his commanding character. The same kind of charge has been made against Napoleon, from the like overflowings having been remarked of a genius grand, and consistently grand, while it occupied only its proper channel; and imputations of this kind, it must be observed, are always acceptable to those who envy the greatness which they cannot aspire to emulate. and misconstrue actions which they cannot comprehend.

CHATHAM'S CORRESPONDENCE.*

[From the Edinburgh Review.]

WHEN the first volume of this very interesting work appeared, we called to it the attention of our readers, and took occasion to enter at some length into the character of the illustrious person whose remains form the principal portion of its contents. The appearance of the two volumes before us, suggests the propriety of again entering upon the subject; and we shall thus be enabled to add farther important information to that before delivered upon Lord Chatham's history and habits; and also to preserve some memorial of the other figures in the group of which he was the centre. We must premise that the editors have continued, in the present publication, to conduct their work with the same diligence and the same success. Availing themselves again, as we presume, of Mr. Wright's able assistance, they have accompanied all the letters with explanatory notes, stating the particulars which the reader desires to know, in order to understand the text;—as the events briefly alluded to in the correspondence, the history of the persons mentioned, and such other

* Correspondence of William Pitt, Earl of Chatham. Edited by William Stanhope Taylor, Esq., and Captain John Henry Pringle, Executors of his son, John Earl of Chatham, and published from the original manuscripts in their possession.

particulars as are known to those only who have devoted much of their time to the personal history of the last hundred and fifty years, and which must be learned by the student of our general annals, else he is liable to make continual and important mistakes. We cannot dismiss this prefatory notice of the execution of the present work, without also, in justice to Mr. Wright, noticing another in which he is engaged—the publication of the parliamentary debates during the parliament which began in 1768, and ended in 1774. These invaluable remains are treasured up in the shorthand notes of Sir Henry Cavendish, who, from the specimen published, (the Quebec Bill Debate,) appears to have been one of the best reporters that ever attempted the difficult and useful task of preserving the eloquence of their day. The government, with a praiseworthy liberality, are understood to have assisted this important work; and surely the public patronage never was better bestowed.

Upon the most remarkable passage of Lord Chatham's life, his resignation in October, 1761, little new light is thrown in these letters. That Lord Bute had widely differed with him all along upon the conduct of the war, and had shown repeated symptoms of uneasiness at his bold and comprehensive plans, termed wild, rash, precipitate—nay, occasionally insane—is certain. These papers contain proofs of this, and also of that favourite minister having viewed, with the jealousy natural to a courtier, one whose influence was built upon his popularity;—one whom the people regarded as their representative in the cabinet, as well as the senate. His extrusion from office, was therefore resolved upon. in all probability, as soon as Lord Bute had, after much hesitation, made up his own mind to take an ostensible situation. He was determined to be the prime minister of the young prince, whose favour he enjoyed; and he saw, like the rest of the cabinet, not only that while Lord Chatham was in office he must ever hold the first place, but that no one else could have any weight or any consideration at all. Gerard Hamilton's ("Single Speech") account of his predominancy, is as correct

as it is well expressed—"For those who want merely to keep a subordinate employment, Mr. Pitt is certainly the best minister in the world; but for those who wish to have a share in the rule and government of the country, he is the worst." It is easy to see that, with the exception of Lord Temple, his brother-in-law, all his other colleagues were likely to adopt Lord Bute's views, and to take part with him who was at once the king's choice and their own safeguard from the great commoner's dominion. This feeling soon appeared in the deliberations of the cabinet.

The French court had thrown obstacles in the way of peace, by taking part with Spain in the differences then beginning with that power. Lord Chatham long perceived that the alliance of the different branches of the Bourbons was closer than the safety of Europe allowed; and he saw that every thing was tending towards a rupture with the court of Madrid. When, therefore, the French ultimatum arrived, he gave a firm and somewhat stern answer to it; in a despatch which the cabinet, after much discussion, only adopted by a narrow majority. Lord Bute, immediately after, wrote a letter to Lord Chatham, in which he communicated the king's desire that the despatch should be sent; but his "great concern at a matter of such immense importance being carried by so slender a majority."—and his surprise that words could not "have been chosen in which all might have concurred." In about a month after this occurrence, intelligence was received of the family compact—confirming Lord Chatham's recent apprehensions—and farther information of measures about to be taken by Spain for protecting her valuable American commerce and remittances. On the 18th September, he gave his decided opinion to the cabinet, that a rupture being now inevitable, "prudence, as well as spirit, required England to secure to herself the first blow;" and he proposed seizing the Spanish fleets on their way to Europe. Lord Bute first opposed this proposal "as rash and unadvisable." No decision was come to, the cabinet being thinly attended. A few days after, all being present, Lord Chatham re-

sumed his advice for immediate hostilities; the majority were not satisfied of the necessity of this step, but no resolution was taken either way. Early in October, a third discussion led to the whole ministers being against him, except Lord Temple. The great man then declared, that, "as this was the moment for humbling the House of Bourbon, it was the last time he would sit among them if his advice were now rejected." He thanked them for their support; said "that he was called to the ministry by the people's voice, and to the people should deem himself accountable for his conduct; but that he could not continue responsible for measures which he was no longer allowed to direct." The king having rejected his advice, tendered in writing, he and Lord Temple resigned their places on the 5th of October.

On the following day, Lord Bute, by the king's desire, offered him the government of Canada, with five thousand a-year of salary, and the chancellorship of the Duchy of Lancaster, a lucrative sinecure; and, after some negotiation, it ended in a peerage to his wife and a pension of £3000. The letters written by Lord Bute on this occasion are very becoming in every respect; those of Lord Chatham are extremely humble, and betoken a far more rapturous sense of the royal favour showed to his family, than of indignation at the court cabal which had just involved in ruin the best interests of his country. "Overwhelmed with the king's gracious goodness, he desires to lay himself at the royal feet with the humble tribute of the most unfeigned and respectful gratitude."—"Penetrated with the bounteous favour of a most benign sovereign and master, he is comforted with his condescension in deigning to bestow one thought about any inclination of his servant."—"Any mark of approbation, flowing from such a spontaneous source of clemency, will be his comfort and his glory." Then, when the matter is finally settled on his own suggestion, he has afterwards to express the "sentiments of veneration and gratitude with which he receives the unbounded effects of beneficence and grace, which the most benign sovereigns has condescended to

bestow.”—“No wonder that the sensations which possess his whole heart, refuse him the power of describing their extent.” But he only desires to “offer his majesty the genuine tribute of the truly feeling heart, which he dares to hope the same royal benevolence which showers on the unmeritorious such unlimited benefits, may deign to accept with equal welcome and goodness.” In all this, we find it hard to say whether the honourable and manly feelings of the mind, or the principles of correct taste, are the most outraged. The feelings expressed by the great commoner on account of bounty,—of pecuniary bounty, accompanying his being driven from the helm to make way for what he deemed imbecility, and what certainly was favouritism—are of a cast bordering upon the mean and the servile—even the sordid; while the words chosen to convey them, are barely the ordinary English of a bad novel. Surely we have made a great step towards the acquisition of plain good sense, in thinking of and speaking to sovereigns, since the year 1761. The most abject courtier would hardly now venture to use such expressions of almost idolatrous devotion to his king, as the greatest patriot of the last century blushed not to employ, when making his successful competitor for power the channel of carrying his thanks for royal favour. We doubt if any man of our times durst so far become accessory to his own undoing with the country—to the loss of all popular weight and influence—as to take a pension and a title upon being extruded from office for a difference of principle. We are quite sure, no one who did stoop so low, would venture still farther to seek his own degradation by such humble and almost pious thanksgivings as Lord Chatham poured out before the altar of royal mercy.

It is but just that we should add—what these letters plainly prove—the fact of Lord Chatham never casting any kind of blame on Lord Bute for his conduct on this memorable occasion. The meanest of the mean, indeed, Bubb Doddington, in his notorious “Diary,” has recorded the triumphant exultation of the base herd of courtiers he belonged to; and has printed a letter,

written by him to the favourite, "sincerely wishing him joy of being delivered of" (as if he had been brought to bed) "a most impracticable colleague, his majesty of a most impure servant, and the country of a most dangerous minister;" and, he adds, a very handsome offer, of "readily undertaking any place where the service is most dangerous and difficult;"—which they well know, who know courtiers and their temperament, means any good easy place, with little work to do, and much salary to receive. Lord Bute's answer does him great credit. While he promises to acquaint the king with Bubb's "very frank and friendly declaration," (whereof no advantage of course was taken,) he says, "he is far from thinking the change advantageous to the king's affairs;" and he then shows how all the blame will be thrown on himself, which, however, will make him steady and resolute as well as cautious. Lord Bute, in the course of a year and a half, was driven from the helm, as he himself distinctly admitted, by the clamour raised against him, mainly on account of his native country; and, although he continued for three or four months longer a member of the cabinet, he soon gave that situation up also, and retired for ever from all concern in public affairs. Before leaving office he opened a communication with Lord Chatham, whom he saw more than once, and who saw the king. The frank exposition which he made of the sweeping change necessary for carrying on the public service, alarmed the sovereign, and the treaty broke off. It was the subject of very great discussion in those days; and, being some time afterwards tabled in the House of Commons, a curious letter remains of Gerard Hamilton, giving an account of the debate. It appears that the king had said to Lord Chatham, "Should I consent to these demands, Mr. Pitt, there would nothing more be left for me, but to take the crown from my head and put it on yours, and then patiently submit my neck to the block." All that had been asked, however, was to turn out the tories, and those who voted for the peace. This passage was not given in the debate; but all who spoke did ample justice to Lord Bute's conduct.

"I think," says Gerard Hamilton, "the day was a very reputable one for Lord Bute—that it gave, as indeed it ought to give, a great deal of satisfaction to his friends, to hear both Mr. Pitt and George Grenville labouring to explain that they had not the least degree of personal animosity whatever to him; and letting it be understood, that if he would wish either of these ministers to be satisfied with a moderate share of influence, they should be extremely happy in his friendship," (II. 379.) It is plain, however, from this passage, that the writer laboured under the common error of supposing that Lord Bute had some influence over, and communication with the king after his resignation in 1763. This impression is visible throughout most of the letters, in this collection, in which any reference to Lord Bute is made. The truth is, nothing can be more utterly groundless than the supposition of his ever having interfered in public affairs after he resigned. We have the most positive assertion to that effect, on the authority of both George III., and the family of Stuart, in Lord Brougham's "Historical Sketches."* Mr. Wilberforce once in the House of Commons made the same statement, distinctly and authentically; and these volumes contain a remarkable confirmation of it in the conversation between Lord Chatham and George III. himself, in August, 1763. When Lord Chatham (vol. ii. p. 250) suggested that the king would be pleased to hear of Lord Bute and himself "uniting their counsels for his service," the king stopped him short with, "How, Mr. Pitt, do you mean to laugh at me? You must know, as well as I, that that nobleman is determined never more to take any share in the administration." This plainly shows that the king himself felt strongly on the subject; and this was possibly one cause of Lord Bute's complete retirement from state affairs. Whether his majesty had become aware of the connexion long believed to exist with his mother, (a kind of *mesalliance* which princely personages are supposed to forgive much less easily than they overlook other and less worthy

* I. 48, 390, and II. 1.

intimacies;) or that he disliked the share which fell to his lot of the former favourite's unpopularity; and that he particularly was impatient of the Scotch connexion, as he in later periods always showed both when speaking of Lord Loughborough and Lord Melville; certain it is, that the somewhat sharp expressions used on this occasion, betoken a wish on his part to give the connexion with Lord Bute a peremptory contradiction; and the same feelings most probably had some concern in actually breaking it off.

While these scenes of our older party history pass under review, it is impossible to avoid marking the great and salutary change which has been wrought in public feeling, and to which the movements of faction have as usual accommodated themselves, since the beginning of George III.'s reign. We allude to the vulgar outcry then raised against Lord Bute on account of his birthplace. His defects as a statesman may have been considerable, although we verily believe they were much exaggerated; for he was a man of perfectly sound judgment, possessed of more plain good sense than fell to the lot of some more brilliant persons; and far better informed than most politicians of his day. His pursuits were those of a literary and even a scientific man. In the history of his own country he was perfectly well read. Of foreign nations, their literature, and their affairs, he knew more than most people. He was sincerely attached to the constitution of the country; and no man ever had a more true or a more judicious friend than George III. and his family possessed in him. That he wanted the decision which was required in whoever would guide the state at a crisis of complicated difficulty—difficulty increased even by the splendid victories which had crowned the arms of our ally in Germany, as well as our own in America and the East—is not to be denied. That he possessed none of the bold original views in administering state affairs, which marked out Lord Chatham for universal admiration, which happily were attended with dazzling success, but which might have nearly ruined the country—is really admitted; and the want of them was, indeed, one of the qualifications

for filling the place of a safe counsellor which Lord Bute relied on—one of the titles on which he advanced his claims to direct the public councils. He professed to be “fit for a calm,” and not one that would “steer too near the shore to show his wit,” any more than, like “a daring pilot in extremity”—

“Pleased with the danger when the waves run high,
He sought the deep.”

His was a compromising spirit, much more resembling the character of Lord Chatham's prudent and practical son, than the genius and the fire of the father. But to the eloquence of neither father nor son did he make any pretensions. He had, indeed, but small force of speech; spoke as much below his abilities as many others have done above theirs; and delivered what he said after so slow and sententious a fashion, that Charles Townsend amused himself with comparing the operation to “the firing of minute guns;”—alluding possibly to the want of effect, as well as the intervals. Some favouritism towards connexions and north countrymen, he might perhaps be accused of; but assuredly not one whit more than might be found in the proceedings of all ministers in those days. Nor could any thing be more clean-handed than his whole conduct as regarded himself; for he was the favourite and the minister of a young king, whose entire confidence he possessed for three or four years; and he retired into private life without a pension, a sinecure place, a step in the peerage to himself or any of his family; nay, without more than a riband and a star to bear witness of his favour. Nor did he ever adopt the practice resorted to by public men in former times, that of making state promotion at home and abroad, the means of silencing troublesome claimants, and disposing of inconvenient neighbours and place-mates. No such charges were made against Lord Bute, for so many years, both in and out of power, the object of such unwearied attacks.

But, indeed, no personal charges at all seem ever to have been thought of, or deemed necessary, to swell the voice of public indignation. He was a *Scotchman*, and

that was all; but that was enough in those days of strong national prejudice, and unreflecting popular violence. That he was a favourite might often be averred, too; but the *gravamen* was in the addition of his country, not in the quality of his post. He was a *Scotch favourite*, and that sufficed. This simple, intelligible topic, founded on a plain and perfectly undeniable fact, suggesting reflections level to the meanest capacity, abounding in results peculiarly interesting, well adapted to excite a personal feeling in all English people, and, as it were, to make every one born south of the Tweed, feel individually concerned in destroying the object of general hostility—this fertile topic, as inexhaustible as it was easy to be handled, furnished all the libellers of the government for many long years with materials for invective;—lent itself to every kind of low ribaldry; became the natural ally of each additional slander that might occasionally be ingrafted on it; and was easily combined with whatever fictions a malignant fancy could supply, when there should arise any demand for variety of abuse. The popular declaimers of the day poured all their invectives on Scotland—for Scotland was reserved the boisterous ranting of the hustings, as well as the more subdued insinuations of the senate—on Scotland was poured out all the phials of wrath which the press diffused through the various classes of society. Scotchmen, Scotch customs, Scotch principles, Scotch appointments, were the perpetual theme of abuse with all who would recommend themselves to English favour in any quarter. The Scotch party were stamped with all the odium of rebellion, because the Pretender had appealed to the Highlanders before he marched into the very loyal country, where a few years before, it had been found necessary to suspend the constitution, lest the great majority of the people should restore the Stuarts by act of parliament! Scotch selfishness was spoken of as glibly as if the talkers did not live in a country where public principle meant the partition of lucrative places amongst a few great families and their retainers. Scotch corruption was declaimed against by those whose rulers openly bought with a price, paid

in moneys numbered, the votes of their representatives; and the jobs done for the Scotch were impudently complained of by the English, only because they were not done for themselves. Nor was it only the bluster of mob meetings, and the ribaldry of the newspapers, that made this base material the staple of their traffic; the most approved vehicles of political sentiment were only fraught with the same article. That it was in universal demand, plainly appears from the use constantly made of it by such a writer as "Junius." It forms the subject of his constant allusions; and even when attacking Lord Mansfield, who had left Scotland in his early infancy, his nativity is never forgotten. Wilkes, however, the mob patriot of the day, the sworn representative of English popular feeling, went still farther in the same direction. His name was not in those times more wedded to that of liberty—which he degraded, after trying in vain to sell it for a price—than his principles (if we may so prostitute the word) were interwoven with the national feeling against Scotland. Nay, as periodical writers in our better day choose for the title of their publications some name connected with the sound and enlightened sentiments of the age, and recommend the productions of their pen to general favour, under the designation of Reformer, or Liberal, or patriot, or Instructor; the unprincipled pretender to patriotism addressed the prejudices of his countrymen under the title of "*North Briton*," to show that on a hatred of part of his fellow-citizens he founded his claims to the confidence of the rest.

It is gratifying to reflect on the complete change which the public feeling on this subject has since that day undergone, universally all over England. Justice is now done, and ample justice, to the merits and the worth of Scotchmen. No jealousy is felt at their promotion to the highest places in the empire. Ministers of state, chancellors, parliamentary orators, learned professors, commanders of first-rate eminence by sea and by land, have come from this country, in a proportion to its extent and the number of its people, highly honourable to our nation; and national jealousy of any

kind is the last feeling excited among our southern neighbours by the success of our countrymen all over the world. While the feeling towards us is so much improved among the English by their extended information and more enlightened views, our own national character has manifestly made considerable advances. The slavish dependence on the rulers of the day; the steadfast looking unto the powers that be, as if they were of God; the dread of any act or word that could betoken independence of great men, by which our ancestors were distinguished—have given place to a more manly and erect state of the mind. While the English have become less bigoted in their prejudices, more refined in their estimate of public virtue, more habituated to think rather of principle than of party and personal advantage; so have we gained not a little of sound and pure notions upon state affairs. Much, however, remains to be done in both parts of the island; much to be learned, and not a little to be unlearned also. We are not like our English neighbours, apt to be suddenly led away by a cry or a project—"of schemes enamoured, and of schemes the gulls;"—nor, like the enthusiastic sons of Ireland, can we submit our faith without the least reflection to the first deceiver who comes forward to play upon us. From such English, and still more from such Irish wanderings, our cautious, wary, distrustful nature, which we not erroneously call sound and safe judgment, for the most part secures us. But that we still regard the political conflict too much as a game of adversaries, and look far more to the interesting question of position than the essential one of principle—regarding rather where men are, on the sunny or the shady side of the wall, than what positions they hold in point of doctrine—looking more to their associates and connexions than their principles—weighing in nice scales their preponderance at court, rather than their estimation in the senate—all this is, perhaps with some show of truth, still alleged against us; but if such peculiarities of character and habits exist, it cannot be doubted that they are destined speedily to give place to a more sound and a more respectable political tempera-

ment. The change would be as nothing compared with that which we have been contemplating in the English people's prejudices respecting ourselves;—prejudices the more hard to be overcome, because the habits of thinking which have their origin in strong feelings, are far more difficult to eradicate than any mere error of judgment, which so naturally falls before the exertion of the reasoning powers.

These volumes afford a striking illustration at once of the former prejudices to which we have been referring, and of Lord Chatham rising, as, indeed, was to be expected, proudly above them. Two letters are preserved; one by a Kentish clergyman, a devoted admirer of the great statesman, and speaking the accustomed language of his party—the liberal and patriotic party of the day—about Wilkes and about Scotland; the other from the earl himself, sharply and sternly rebuking the officious and perverted zeal of the busy priest. We print them at length for the reader's edification.

The Rev. Paul Shenton, to Mr. Pitt.

Hartcliffe, near Chatham, Dec. 4, 1764.

"HONOURED SIR,—I am a clergyman, and a sincere well-wisher to the glorious society in Albemarle street, and to all Mr. Pitt's friends and party. I have often had thoughts of making my wishes known to Mr. Pitt, but have hitherto been deterred by the fear and awe of approaching so great a name. I have at length broke through my natural timidity, and have ventured in this manner to let the glorious minority know they have many friends in secret.

"My intention of intruding on your time is this. In my two parishes I can procure eight or nine votes; and in the neighbourhood, I may venture to say, I could procure twenty. I belong to a club of gentlemen, some of whom have votes, and all sincere partisans of Mr. Pitt. Our intention is to bring in, at the election for the county, some gentlemen of your party; that is, the

party of honour and virtue. If Mr. Wilkes returns to England by the time of the election, and if you would honour us so far as to send down that able statesman, I sincerely believe the county in general would elect him, for his own and your sake. It is incompatible with Mr. Wilkes's affairs to represent the county, I dare be bold to say, that the county will make choice of any one you will recommend.

"I have some thoughts of writing a pamphlet, to exhort the people of England to repeal the union act. This book I should be extremely glad of dedicating to Lord Chief Justice Pratt; or, if I could have your permission of dedicating it to yourself, I should think myself superlatively happy. In this little pamphlet, I have traced the union from the time that Edward the First conquered Scotland, and shall point out, *honesto calamo*, all the miseries and disgraces which England has suffered, since she has been united to that barren province. I have nothing more to add, but to ask your pardon for this great freedom. I am, honourable sir, your most obedient, most humble servant.

"PAUL SHENTON."

Mr. Pitt, to the Rev. Paul Shenton.

[From a draught in Lady Chatham's handwriting.]

Hayes, Dec. 8, 1764.

"SIR,—Having received a letter signed with the name to which I direct this, I cannot defer a moment, expressing my astonishment and concern that one of your rank, a clergyman, could so misconceive of me, as to imagine that I countenanced libels, because I disapprove of part of the methods of proceeding relating to them. Let me undeceive you, sir, by telling you, that no well-wisher of mine, which you are so good as to say you are, can have led you into this error. I have ever abhorred such odious and dangerous writings; and in the late unhappy instance of the *North Briton*, no

man concurred more heartily than I did, in condemning and branding so licentious and criminal a paper.

"Next, as to a pamphlet which you say you have thoughts of writing, to exhort the people of England to repeal the act of union, and which you wish to dedicate to me, or to the great magistrate which you mention—know, sir, that I revere the union as the main foundation of the strength and security of this island; that it was the great object of our immortal deliverer, King William; that France may wish to dissolve it, but that all good Englishmen will ever maintain it inviolate.

"You will, I doubt not, accept in good part, this free, but not unuseful admonition to misguided zeal; and, if you really favour me with your good wishes, you will be glad to understand me aright. Be assured, then, sir, that I disdain and detest faction, as sincerely as I reverence and love the laws, rights, privileges, and honour of my country. I am, sir, your obedient humble servant,

"WILLIAM PITT."

"P. S. This letter to you, may serve for all who, like you, are so widely mistaken concerning me."

There is nothing, in this just and excellent letter, more to be remarked, than the illustrious writer's noble disregard of personal consequences, when he is called upon to take his part respecting a man at that time so powerful as Wilkes, and a party so devoted to their base idol as was his. Lord Chatham had become the object of unmeasured attacks, as we shall presently have occasion to observe, ever since his celebrated resignation. The court hated because it had lost him; hated yet more bitterly, because it had maltreated him. Many of his supporters among the people had turned their backs upon the man, no longer at the right hand of power. He still had the hearts of the liberal party with him; but over that party Wilkes and his city junto exercised an almost boundless sway. In these circumstances, a man situated as he was, had the strongest

motives to avoid a breach with that *coterie*, and, indeed, with that party; nor could any thing more put its favour to hazard, than at once declaring war against its daily leaders out of doors. Yet this step he hesitated not one moment to take. He did not rest there. In his place in parliament, a year before, and in circumstances yet more critical, as regarded his own standing with the popular party, he had openly "disavowed all connexion with the man;" describing him as "the blasphemer of his God, and libeller of his king;" declaring "his abhorrence of the whole series of *North Britons*, and all his national reflection as illiberal, unmanly, detestable;" professing his opinion that, as the king's subjects were "one people, the man who divided them was guilty of sedition;" and finally branding him "as one not deserving to be ranked among the human species." This strong and even vehement language was applied to the man, at a time when Lord Chatham was vigorously defending the constitution assailed in his person, and was maintaining the doctrine that privilege of parliament extended to cases of libel; as he afterwards resisted the absurd extension of that privilege to the expulsion of Wilkes, when duly elected to serve. For Lord Chatham justly thought, that if the personal character of any one is to alienate men of principle from their defence, when attacked by arbitrary power, whether of courts or of senates, there is no safety for freedom, no protection for rights; inasmuch as it is ever in such vile subjects that the wily hand of tyranny makes its experiments how far arbitrary power may be safely pushed;—cunningly availing itself of men's natural repugnance to ally themselves with infamy, even the infamous are oppressed, and when their wrongs, and not their characters, are alone in question.

In the course taken by this great man, upon the occasion we have been referring to, a lesson well deserving to be deeply considered, and an example most worthy of being imitated by all statesmen, is held up to their view. A truckling, temporizing, neutral course, can never honourably, nor for any length of time beneficially, nor in the end even safely, be pursued towards

base and profligate coadjutors, by public men; whether in office, or only standing upon the higher and the independent ground of their personal authority. To gain the support of such unworthy allies for the hour of difficulty, may tempt some; to ward off the blow for a season, by suppressing their opinion, by concealing their disgust at meanness and falsehood, may appear the dictates of prudence; but let them be well assured that all difficulties will only be augmented, all troubles be made to thicken around them, by a course as despicable as it is shortsighted; useless, indeed, the resolution has been taken of unqualified, unconditional submission—that step to which things must come at last. More noble, and not less wise and discreet than noble, sentiments inspired by the great man whose career we are surveying. He, without any hesitation, declared war upon profligate and unprincipled panders to the passions of the mob; and to find them in alliance with the party on whose support he relied, and with the principles which in general he approved, only made him the more anxious to shake himself and his opinions, the more free from the load of such a contamination. That no advance towards hostility had ever been made by the party in question before this attack, these volumes bear witness; for they contain a letter from Wilkes to the minister, asking a place;—of course vowing eternal attachment to him “among all the chances and changes of a political world;” and professing that “it is his pride to have Mr. Pitt for his patron and friend.” That some personal intimacy had subsisted between the parties, was probably a reason the more for throwing the bad man off. The speech in parliament bears some proofs of this, especially in alluding to Lord Temple, in whose militia regiment Wilkes was an officer.

The course of these reflections and these statements regarding Lord Chatham's history, has brought us to mention the person who at that time of day filled the principal place among the demagogues out of doors, and whose name was for a long time regarded as synonymous with resistance to oppression.

The history of Wilkes is well known, and his general character is no longer any matter of controversy. Indeed, it is only justice towards him to remark, that there was so little about him of hypocrisy—the “homage due from vice to virtue” being by him paid as reluctantly and as sparingly as any of his other debts—that, even while in the height of his popularity, hardly any doubt hung over his real habits and dispositions. About liberty, for which he cared little, and would willingly have sacrificed less, he made a loud and blustering outcry, which was only his way of driving his trade; but to purity of private life, even to its decencies, he certainly made no pretence; and, during the time of the mob’s idolatry of his name, there never existed any belief in his good character as a man, however much his partisans might be deceived in their notion that he was unlikely to sell them. He had received a good education—was a fair classical scholar—possessed the agreeable manners of polished society—married an heiress half as old again as himself—obliged her, by his licentious habits and profligate society, to live apart from him—made an attempt, when in want of money, to extort from her the annuity he had allowed for her support,—is recorded in the Term Reports of the Court of King’s Bench,* to have been signally defeated in this nefarious scheme—continued to associate with gentlemen of fortune far above his own—passed part of his life as a militia colonel—and fell into the embarrassed circumstances which, naturally resulting from such habits, occasioned in their turn the violent political courses pursued by him in order to relieve his wants. Contemporaneous, however, with the commencement of his loud-toned patriotism, and his virulent abuse of the Court, were his attempts to obtain promotion. One of these we have already noted in his application to Lord Chat-ham for a seat at the Board of Trade. Soon after that failure, he was defeated in his designs upon the embassy at Constantinople, which his zeal for the liberties of the English people, and his wish to promote them in the

* 1 Burr. 452. Easter, 31 Geo. II., Rex. v. Mary Mead.

most effectual manner, induced him to desire; and a third time his attempt was frustrated, to make head against the corruptions of the British Court, by repairing as governor to the province of Canada. Lord Bute and his party had some hand in these disappointments; and to running them down his zealous efforts were now directed.

With such a history, both in public and private, there was a slender chance of his figuring to any good purpose as a patriot; but he took the chance of some of those lucky hits, those windfalls, which occasionally betide that trade, in the lucrative shape of ill-judged persecution. He fared forth upon his voyage in the well-established line of *Libel*, and he made a more than usually successful venture; for he was not only prosecuted and convicted in the ordinary way, but a blundering Secretary of State issued a general warrant to seize his papers—was of course resisted,—allowed the matter to come into court—sustained an immediate defeat—and was successfully sued for damages by the victorious party. Add to this, his imprisonment for a libel, with his repeated expulsions from the House of Commons, and his finally defeating that body, and compelling them to erase the resolution from their journals—and his merits were so great, that not even the ugly concomitant of another conviction for a grossly obscene book, printed clandestinely at a private press, could countervail his political virtues. He became the prime favourite of the mob, and was even admitted by more rational patriots to have deserved well of the constitution, by the courage and the skill he had shown in fighting two severe battles, and gaining for it two important victories. The promotion which he had in vain sought in the purlieus of Whitehall, awaited him in the city; he became Alderman; he became Lord Mayor; and, having obtained the lucrative civic office of chamberlain, which placed him for life in affluent circumstances, he retired, while in the prime of life, from a political warfare, of which he had accomplished all the purposes, by reaping its most precious fruits;—passed the rest of his days in the support

of the government; never raised his voice for reform, or for peace, or to mitigate the hostility of our court towards the country that had afforded him shelter in his banishment, nor ever quitted the standard of Mr. Pitt when it marshalled its followers to assaults on the constitution, compared with which all he had ever even imputed and invented against Lord Bute, sank into mere insignificance.

That the folly of the government, concurring with the excited and sulky temper of the times, enabled Wilkes to drive so gainful a trade in patriotism, with so small a provision of the capital generally deemed necessary to embark in it, there can be little doubt. In any ordinary circumstances, his speculation never could have succeeded. In most of the qualities required for it, he was exceedingly deficient. Though of good manners and even a winning address, his personal appearance was so revolting as to be hardly human. High birth he could not boast; for his father was a respectable distiller in Clerkenwell. Of fortune he had but a moderate share, and it was all spent before he became a candidate for popular favour; and his circumstances were so notoriously desperate, that he lived for years on patriotic subscriptions. Those more sterling qualities of strict moral conduct, regular religious habits, temperate and prudent behaviour, regular industrious life—qualities which are generally required of public men, even if more superficial accomplishments should be dispensed with—he had absolutely nothing; and the most flagrant violations of decency on moral as well as religious matters were committed, were known, were believed, and were overlooked by the multitude, in the person of their favourite champion, who yet had the address to turn against one of his antagonists, a clerical gentleman, some of those feelings of the English people in behalf of decorum, all of which his life was passed in openly violating. Of the light but very important accomplishments which fill so prominent a place in the patriotic character, great eloquence, and a strong and masculine style in writing, he had but little. His compositions are more pointed than powerful; his wit

shines far more than his passions glow ; and as a speaker, when he did speak, which was but rarely, he showed indeed some address and much presence of mind, but no force, and produced hardly any effect. Of his readiness, an anecdote is preserved which may be worth relating, Mr. Luttrell and he were standing on the Brentford hustings, when he asked his adversary privately, whether he thought there were more fools or rogues among the multitudes of Wilkites spread out before them. " I'll tell them what you say, and put an end to you," said the colonel—but perceiving that the threat gave Wilkes no alarm, he added, " Surely you don't mean to say you could stand here one hour after I did so?" " Why (the answer was) *you* would not be alive one instant after."—" How so?"—" I should merely say it was a fabrication, and they would destroy you in the twinkling of an eye!"

If we are to judge of his speaking by the very few samples preserved of it, we should form a very humble estimate of its merits. Constant declamation about rights, and liberties, and tyrants, and corruption, with hardly the merit of the most ordinary common-places on these hackneyed topics, seem to fill up its measure—with neither fact, nor argument, nor point, nor any thing at all happy or new in the handling of the threadbare material. But what it wanted in force it probably made up in fury ; and, as calling names is an easy work to do, the enraged multitude as easily is pleased with what suits their excited feelings, gratifying the craving for more stimulus which such excitement produces. That he failed, and signally failed, whenever he was called upon to address an audience which rejects such matter, is very certain. In parliament he was seldom or never heard after his own case had ceased to occupy the public attention ; and nothing can be worse than his address to the Court of Common Pleas when he was discharged. The occasion, too, on which he failed was a great one, when a victory for constitutional principle had been gained perhaps by him—certainly in his person. All the people of London were hanging on the lips of their leader ; yet nothing

could be worse or feebler than his address, of which the burden was a topic as much out of place as possible in a court of justice, where the strict letter of the law had alone prevailed, and the topic was handled with miserable inefficiency. "Liberty, my lords, liberty has been the object of my life! liberty" and so forth. He might about as well have sung a song, or lifted his hat and given three cheers.

In his writings, especially his dedication to Lord Bute of "Roger Mortimer," a tragedy, his notes on Warburton, and his ironical criticism on the speaker's reprimand to the printers, we trace much of that power of wit and of humour which he possessed to an extraordinary degree in private society. The last of these three pieces is by far the best, though he himself greatly preferred the first. It must be allowed, however, that neither is very original; and that they might easily enough have occurred to a diligent reader of Swift, Addison, Arbuthnot, and of Bolingbroke's dedication to Walpole, under the name of D'Anvers—a very superior production in all respects to the dedication of Roger Mortimer.

Of his convivial wit no doubt can remain. Gibbon, who passed an evening with him in 1762, when both were militia officers, says, "I scarcely ever met with a better companion; he has inexhaustible spirits, infinite wit and humour, and a great deal of knowledge." He adds, "a thorough profligate in principle as in practice; his life, stained with every vice, and his conversation full of blasphemy and indecency. These morals he glories in; for shame is a weakness he has long since surmounted." This, no doubt, is greatly exaggerated, and the historian, believing him really to confess his political profligacy, is perhaps in error also,—“he told us that in this time of public dissension he was resolved to make his fortune.” Possibly this was little more than a variety of his well-known saying to some one who was fawning on him with extreme doctrines. "I hope you don't take me for a Wilkite."

Of his wit and drollery some passages are preserved in society; but of these not many can with propriety be

cited. We doubt if his retort to Lord Sandwich be of this description, when being asked, coarsely enough, "Whether he thought he should die by a halter or by a certain disease!" he quickly said, "That depends on whether I embrace your lordship's principles or your mistress." We give this, in order to contradict the French anecdote, which ascribes this *mot* to Mirabeau as a retort to Cardinal Maury, sitting in the National Assembly. We heard it ourselves from one who was present when the dialogue took place, many years before the French revolution. His exclamation, powerfully humorous certainly, on Lord Thurlow's solemn hypocrisy in the House of Lords, is well known. When that consummate piece of cant was performed with all the solemnity which the actor's incredible air, eyebrows, voice, could lend the imprecation, "If I forget my sovereign, may my God forget me!"—Wilkes, seated on the steps of the throne, cyeing him askance with his inhuman squint and demoniac grin, muttered, "Forget you! He'll see you d——d first."

One quality remains to be added, but that a high one, and for a demagogue essential. He was a courageous man. Neither politically nor personally did he know what fear was. Into no risks for his party did he ever hesitate to rush. From no danger, individually, was he ever known to turn away. The meeting which he gave Secretary Martin, and which nearly cost him his life, was altogether unnecessary; he might easily have avoided it; and, when a wild young Scotch officer asked satisfaction for something said against his country, he met no refusal of his absurd demand; but was ordered on a distant service before he could repair to Flanders, whither Wilkes went to fight him, after the Mareschal's Court of France had interdicted a meeting in that country.

Some of the other honourable feelings which are usually found in company with bravery, seem generally to have belonged to him. He was a man, apparently, of his word. In his necessities, though he submitted to eleemosynary aid for pecuniary supplies, and mal-treated his wife to relieve his embarrassments, he yet had vir-

ture enough to avoid many of the disreputable expedients which have made the condition of the needy be compared to the impossibility of keeping an empty sack upright. His worst offence, and that which brings his honesty into greatest discredit, is certainly the playing a game in political virtue, or driving a commerce of patriotism, which the reader of his story is constantly struck with; and in no instance does this appear more plainly than in such attempts at pandering to the passions of the people, as his addressing a canting letter to the lord mayor, when refusing, as Sheriff of London, to attend the procession to St. Paul's on the occasion of the king's accession. He grounds his refusal on the preference he gives to "the real administration of justice, and his unwillingness to celebrate the accession of a prince, under whose inauspicious reign the constitution has been grossly and deliberately violated." That this was a measure to catch mob applause, is proved by his sending a draft of his epistle to Junius for his opinion, and in his note, enclosing the paper, he calls it a "*manœuvre*."*—(Woodfall's Junius, I. 324.)

* In admitting the polished manners of Wilkes, and that he had lived much in good society, somewhat in the best, we do not admit that his turn of mind was not in some sort vulgar—witness his letters to Junius throughout—particularly the papers wherein he describes Junius's private communications to him as "*stirring up his spirits like a kiss from Chloe*," and asks the "Great Unknown" to accept of what? Books? Valuable MSS.? Interesting information? No—but tickets to the lord mayor's dinner—his intolerable dinner—and the lord mayoress's far more intolerable ball, with a hint to bring his Junia, if there be one.—Woodfall, I. 325.

When, in 1817, Mr. Brougham stated his strong opinion in the House of Commons on Wilkes's character and the shame that his popularity brought on the people of England for a time, Mr. Wilberforce expressed his thanks to him and confirmed his statements. Mr. Canning, however, observed that Wilkes was by no means a singular instance of demagogues not being respectable, and added,

He's knight o'th' shire, and represents them all,

which is an exaggerated view certainly. Sir Philip Francis, the morning after, remonstrated strongly, in company of other friends, with Mr. B., upon his saying any thing in disparagement of a man run down by the court. He regarded the offence as greatly aggravated by the praise which had been given to Lord Mansfield, against

We have dwelt longer upon this celebrated, rather let us say noted person, than may seem to be in proportion or keeping with this sketch of the group in which he figures; because it is wholesome to contemplate the nature, and reflect upon the fate, of one beyond all others of his day the popular favourite—that is to say, the idol of the mob; one who, by the force of their applause, kept so far a footing with the better part of society as to be very little blamed, very cautiously abjured, by those most filled with disgust and with detestation of his practices. The men in parliament, the members of the popular party, with perhaps the single exception of Lord Chatham, while they would have viewed with utter scorn any approaches he might make to their intimacy, nevertheless were too much afraid of losing the countenance of the multitude he ruled over, to express their strongly entertained sentiments of his great demerits. They might not so far disgrace themselves as to truckle in their measures; they never certainly courted him with their patronage to himself or his accomplices; but they were under the powerful influence of intimidation, and were content to pass for his fellow-labourers in the whig vineyard; and to suppress the feelings with which his conduct in public and private life filled them, rather than encounter his vengeance and risk the loss, the temporary loss, of mob applause. How base does such conduct now appear, and how noble the contrast of Lord Chatham's manly deportment in the eyes of impartial posterity!

But the fall, the rapid and total declension, of Wilkes' fame—the utter obliuion into which his very name has passed for all purposes save the remembrance of his vices—the very ruins of his reputation no longer existing in our political history—this affords also a salutary lesson to the followers of the multitude,—those who may court the applause of the hour, and regulate their conduct towards the people, not by their own sound and conscientious opinions of what is right, but by the

whom he inveighed bitterly. This tone, so precisely that of Junius upon both subjects, was much remarked at the time.

desire to gain fame in doing what is pleasing, and to avoid giving the displeasure that arises from telling wholesome truths. Never man more pandered to the appetites of the mob than Wilkes; never political pimp gave more uniform contentment to his employers. Having the sturdy English and not the voluble Irish to deal with, he durst not do or say as he chose himself; but was compelled to follow that he might seem to lead, or at least to go two steps with his followers that he might get them to go three with him. He dared not deceive them grossly, clumsily, openly, impudently—dared not tell them opposite stories in the same breath—give them one advice to-day and the contrary one to-morrow—pledge himself to a dozen things at one and the same time; then come before them with every one pledge unredcemed, and ask their voices, and ask their money on the credit of as many more pledges for the succeeding half year—all this with the obstinate and jealous people of England was out of the question; it could not have passed for six weeks. But he committed as great, if not as gross, frauds upon them; abused their confidence as entirely if not so shamefully; catered for their depraved appetites in all the base dainties of sedition, and slander, and thoughtless violence, and unreasonable demands; instead of using his influence to guide their judgment, improve their taste, reclaim them from bad courses, and better their condition by providing for their instruction. The means by which he retained their attachment were disgraceful and vile. Like the hypocrite, whose whole public life was a lie. The tribute which his unruly appetites kept him from paying to private morals, his dread of the mob, or his desire to use them for his selfish purposes, made him yield to public virtue; and he never appeared before the world without the mark of patriotic enthusiasm or democratic fury: he who in the recesses of Mendenham Abbey, and before many witnesses, gave the eucharist to an ape, or prostituted the printing press to multiply copies of a production that would dye with blushes the cheek of an impure.

• It is the abuse, no doubt, of such popular courses.

that we are reprobating. Popularity we are far from contemning; it is often an honourable acquisition when duly earned, always a test of good done or evil resisted. But to be of a pure and genuine kind, it must have one stamp—the security of one safe and certain die; it must be popularity that follows good actions, not that which is run after. Nor can we do a greater service to the people themselves, nor read a more wholesome lesson to the race, above all, of rising statesmen, than to mark how much the mock-patriot, the mob-seeker, the parasite of the giddy multitude, falls into the very worst faults for which popular men are wont the most loudly to condemn, and most heartily to despise, the courtly fawners upon princes. Flattery indeed! obsequiousness! time-serving! What courtier of them all ever took more pains to soothe an irritable or to please a capricious prince than Wilkes—to assuage the anger or gain the favour by humouring the prejudices of the mob! Falsehood truly! intrigue! manœuvre! Where did ever titled suitor for promotion lay his plots more cunningly, or spread more wide his net, or plant more pensively those irons in the fire, whereby the waiters upon royal bounty forge to themselves and to their country, chains, that they may also make the ladder they are to mount by, than the patriot of the city did to delude the multitude, whose slave he made himself, that he might be rewarded with their sweet voices, and so rise to wealth and to power? When he penned the letter of cant about administering justice, rather than join in a procession to honour the accession of a prince, whom in a private petition he covered over thick and threefold with the slime of his flattery, he called it himself a manœuvre. When he delivered a rant about liberty before the reverend judges of the land—the speaking law of the land—he knew full well that he was not delighting those he addressed, but the mob out of doors, on whose ears the trash was to be echoed back. When he spoke a speech in Parliament of which no one heard a word, and said aside to a friend who urged the fruitlessness of the attempt of making the house listen—
 “Speak it I must, for it has been printed in the news-

papers this half hour"—he confessed that he was acting a false part in one place to compass a real object in another;—as thoroughly as ever minister did when affecting by smiles to be well in his prince's good graces before the multitude, all the while knowing that he was receiving a royal rebuke. When he and one confederate in the private room of a tavern issued a declaration, beginning, "We, the people of England," and signed, "by order of the meeting,"—he practised as gross a fraud upon that people as ever peer or parasite, when affecting to pine for the prince's smiles, and to be devoted to his pleasure, in all the life they led consecrated to the fartherance of their own. It is no object of ours to exalt courtly acts, or undervalue popular courses; no wish have we to over estimate the claims of aristocracy at the cost of lowering the people. Both departments of our mixed social structure demand equally our regard; but we wish to put the claims of each on their proper footing. We say, and very sincerely say with Cicero—"Omnes boni semper nobilitati favemus, et quia utile est reipublicæ nobiles homines esse dignos majoribus suis; et quia valet, apud nos clarorum hominum et bene de republica meritorum memoria, etiam mortuorum," (*Pro Sext.*) These are the uses, and these the merits of the aristocratic branch of our system; while the mean arts of the courtier only degrade the patrician character. But mean as they are, their vileness does not exceed that of the like arts practised towards the multitude; nor is the sovereign prince whose ear the flatterers essay to tickle, that they may deceive him for their own purposes, more entirely injured by the deception which withholds the truth, than the sovereign people is betrayed and undone by those who, for their own vile ends, pass their lives in suppressing wholesome truth, and propagating popular delusion.

Nor let it be deemed the exclusive province of false patriots, to deal in such practices upon the public credulity. They drive a trade, indeed, of which these form the staple; but their monopoly is interfered with often-times by the tools of the court. A memorable instance of this is furnished in the result of that resigna-

tion, the history of which we were considering when drawn aside to contemplate the character of men who flourished in those times, and were mixed up with the event. No sooner had Lord Chatham ceased to serve the crown, than he was assailed with every weapon of abuse which gold could hire, or patronage command, or factious rage marshal, or personal malice, partly originating in envy, partly no doubt in disappointed place-hunting, could point against him. He had quitted the councils of his sovereign with every degree of respect towards him, and in as inoffensive a manner towards his colleagues as it was possible to conceive. Yet was his removal not to be forgiven by the court he had left. His loss of office was the result of his honest and inflexible principles, which he would not sacrifice to the love of power; yet was he treated as if he had betrayed the country and abandoned his opinions. He was in truth the injured, and, next to the country, the most deeply injured party; yet did the wrong-doers, they who had deprived the country of his councils, and him of the power to serve and to save her, treat him as if they were the victims themselves of his misconduct—acting on the established principle of bad men, never to pardon those they injure or betray. Hear how Mr. Burke describes the assaults on him:—"Upon the resignation of Mr. Pitt, a torrent of low and illiberal abuse was poured out. His whole life, public and private, was scrutinized with the utmost malignity, to furnish matter of calumny against him. The successes of his administration were depreciated; his faults were monstrously exaggerated; and the rewards and honours so justly conferred on him by his sovereign, were, by every trick of wit, ridicule, and buffoonery, converted into matter of degradation and disgrace." In all these attacks he remained unmoved—unmoved, saw himself misrepresented and defamed—unmoved, perceived how much he was assailed by one party, how little defended by the other—unmoved, observed how the honesty with which he had discharged his official duty, by refusing promotion to unworthy men, was now the real motive of the most slanderous attacks—proceeding, from the most sordid of all spite, the spirit of revenge, and enve-

named by the necessity of concealing its source, or cloaking it under the false mask of public spirit.

Among those who distinguished themselves in parliament, and were supposed to exhaust unabashed, unpunished, the malignity of a base nature, Colonel Barrè held a distinguished place; an Irishman of obscure origin, superficial accomplishments, much personal spirit, and considerable powers of speech; but regardless of moderation or even decorum in seeking either preferment to place of which he deemed himself worthy, or revenge for slights he thought he had received. 'This gallant orator, who had made a very humble and earnest application to the minister for promotion, and vowed, only a year before, that the treatment he then met with had "bound him in the highest gratitude," had not sat two days in parliament before he conceived that it would be a good speculation to attack Mr. Pitt. now out of power. In thus pursuing what he deemed the shortest road to a farther step in the army, he descended to a ribaldry which, though its illustrious object might well suffer to pass over his head, (and accordingly he stooped not even to make any mention, of it,) it was abundantly shameful for the house, so long his adoring follower, to permit;—that house which, for years of his lead in it, had never even divided against him. A sample of this base performance is found in the Mitchell MS., and given in the publication before us.* Speaking of the great orator's manner, he said—"There he would stand, turning up his eyes to heaven that witnessed his perjuries, and, laying his hand in a solemn manner upon the table, that sacriligious hand that had been employed in tearing out the bowels of his country." In after times, the author of this stuff became distinguished for a strong, pointed, and often successful species of eloquence. He never attained the rank of an important debater; but was one of the light troops who performed good, because active and ready, service in skirmishing against a ministry on the spur of the occasion. His style was ambitious, often epigrammatic.

and dealt largely in the sarcastic; and Junius, when characterizing Burke for the figurative, says,—“I willingly accept a simile from Mr. Burke, or a sarcasm from Colonel Barré.” If he had much success in these lines, he must have improved very much in after life upon the sample which is quoted above; and which is about as mean in the execution as vile in the design.

The person who discovered this adventurer, and brought him into parliament, filled one of the most distinguished places in the times of Lord Chatham; and was uniformly attached to that great man, both in public and in private life, with the most unvarying steadiness of which either friendship or faction is capable. We shall at once be understood to mean the Earl of Shelburne, representative of the ancient house of Fitzmaurice, Earls of Kerry, and of the family of Petty—yet more distinguished by the celebrity of its founder, the great political arithmetician of the seventeenth century; honourably known, too, and usefully for his country, as father of the present Lord Lansdowne, one of the most able, honest, and amiable statesmen of our times.* Than Lord Shelburne, few political characters in any age ever brought a larger share of information, or a more statesmanlike cast of mind, to the task of administering state affairs. Though bred to arms, and having illustrated his early years by serving at Minden and other fields, he had none of the indolent mental habits in which soldiers are apt to indulge; as if the courage of their profession could cover all defects of education or of exertion. In a rank and fortune generally found so unfavourable to habits of study, he cultivated science, and relaxed his mind in literary pursuits like a man of humbler station. Far superior to the frivolous tastes of the giddy throng whom wealth and rank intoxicate, still farther removed from the contempt which they often affect for men of learning, Lord Shelburne preferred habitually the society of the latter to that of the “little

* It is impossible ever to name this noble house, without renewing the expressions of grief at the untimely loss of its heir and hope, Lord Kerry, one of the fastest friends that ever popular improvement had to deplore.

great" who look down upon them; and he made his palaces the abode of the chemists, and the resort of the mathematicians and the lawyers, who were magnanimously extending the bounds of human knowledge by their discoveries, or usefully imparting to the zealous student those lights which others had struck out. The malice of factious and ignorant men rewarded him according to his deserts, when they confessed that they had nothing worse for which to lampoon him than his habitual intimacy with the Prices, and the Priestleys, and the Franklins.*

The administration of this eminent person was distinguished, both when secretary of state at a very early age, and when prime minister later in life, by a scrupulous regard for the principles of a free government—by the most wise and provident uses of the resources and commerce of the country—by an enlarged and judicious management of her foreign relations; and, above all, by a strict adherence to the policy—say rather the virtue, the cardinal virtue of peace. He closed the American war by a treaty which gave up less, and gained more, for the empire than could reasonably have been expected after a series of such disastrous years. It was the vile game of party to attack this great negotiation, in order to displace the ministers who had so admirably conducted it; and, in order to compass this design, the serious enemies of the American war joined with those who had wrongfully made it, and worse conducted it, in a coalition which was punished by the destruction of the popularity of both the parties to the intrigue.

If Lord Shelburne was the fast friend of civil liberty—a minister, as Bentham said, who never feared the people—he was even more distinguished for his liberal and tolerant principles on religious subjects. Men of bigoted habits of thinking called him a Socinian, for the purpose of discrediting him who patronized the followers of Locke and Newton in science; and who had no occasion to blush at being as good a Christian as those

* Rolliad.

great lights of this world, and pillars of our faith in the next. But it is more than probable, that his friendship with Priestley and Price obtained for him this reputation; for we believe he was of principles that allied him to the established church.

His oratory was simple, unambitious, fraught with important matter, abounding in extensive and various information; and accordingly, the superficial men who jeered at his literary pursuits, likewise made themselves merry with the learned texture of his discourse, and held him up to ridicule for communicating to his hearers the information most wanted upon the subject-matter of discussion. There were certain qualities which they found safer to pass over in silence, than to provoke the display of. He was, like his illustrious friend and the set of men he lived with, a man of consummate boldness—in action as well as in council; and he lived at a time when the chiefs of contending parties never went into the field of argument, without deeming it very probable that the war should be transferred within a few hours to other plains. His coolness, as well as perhaps his pride, were shown on one of those occasions; when a gentleman, then extremely little known, and who much overrated his own importance, desired a hostile meeting; and, finding his request very readily granted, came out with his friend. “Which of these is the gentleman I am come to meet?”—asked his lordship with a civil smile. Being seriously wounded by Colonel Fullerton, he amused himself with a good-humoured jest on the nature and possible results of the injury he had received.

If in his oratory—his diction and the manner of his speaking—this eminent statesman bestowed little care, his written compositions showed still less. Nothing can be more inartificial, and even slovenly, than the expression of his sound and sagacious opinions, the proposition of his provident and judicious plans, in his letters; many of which are to be found in these volumes, and all of which, by their matter, though not their style, amply repay the trouble of perusal. In some of them, indeed, we are reminded of the diction of Oliver Crom-

well, though the meaning is far from being so hard to get at. Take an example. "Though I believe I am pretty exact in relating what Lord Rockingham said; yet, as he did not expressly desire it to be communicated, I should be sorry that it made the foundation even of an opinion in your own mind, till you had it from better authority. Though he seemed to me to speak with a manner of decision, yet he may have meant it a manner of negotiation which I may not understand. At any rate, I have many pardons to ask for troubling you with so long a letter, and in return, I will only beg for a very short one, either from you or lord Chatham, to tell me. I hope that you are not the worse for sitting up so late in the house."

Again—"My reason for not choosing the new department proposed is no dislike to the offer, but that I think the general system affected by it; but if Lord Chatham desires I should do it, I am very ready to take the post he wishes, notwithstanding my own earnest inclination. Lord Chatham, if he enters at all into the situation, must carry me very strongly, to miss no proper opportunity of declining office altogether, when I do not see my way, and have little or nothing to direct my conduct."

The whigs, in revenge for his heading the government on Lord Rockingham's death, in violation of no party tie, for he never belonged, or professed to belong, to any party, constantly endeavoured to represent him as a dangerous, treacherous, jesuitical person. There remains no kind of evidence to bear out this grave charge. His attachment through life was to Lord Chatham, whom, as he never flattered, so he never deserted or betrayed. The brutal attack of Colonel Barré, when sitting for Calne under his patronage, is the only thing that requires to be explained. He ought, assuredly, to have had the man out of parliament, on the first opportunity. But it deserves to be considered, that we are unacquainted with what passed with him in private, after he had committed the outrage in the House of Commons. The political adventurer may have shown a contrition as abject as his offence had been shameless; and the great man who was the object of his abuse may

have been gained over to make intercession, and prevent his ruin. Thus much is certain, that until death closed the career of Lord Chatham, his firm and steady supporter was Lord Shelburne; and that he made his son his chancellor of the exchequer at the early age of three-and twenty.

His promoting men of sterling talents, and surrounding himself with such, is another characteristic of this remarkable person. We say nothing of Mr. Pitt, for his station was established when he united him to his government; nor of Colonel Barrè, because he was but a second-rate man. But it deserves to be recorded that the same person whose home was the abode of Priestley, first brought into public life the great capacity of Dunning, and the greater and more universal genius of a Jarvis.

In their political lives, Chatham and Shelburne were united, and in their fates they were not divided. Both disclaimed all party ties; both were the object of rancorous, unrestrained, and, in the end, innocuous party abuse. It was Lord Chatham's boast that he thought and acted for himself; would bend to the dictation of no man—no junto; would pursue his course for the good and the glory of his country, and not suit it to the calculations of party interest. He constantly and manfully declared that he would go into parliament unfettered, and free to deliver his unbiassed opinion on state affairs; that the country's friends were his allies; and that he knew but one adversary—her enemies and the enemies of her free constitution. His scorn of the miserable councils to which party tactics so often subject such associations, breaks out at every turn of affairs. "I was in town on Wednesday, (says he,) and saw Lord Rockingham, and learnt nothing more than what I knew before, that the marquis is an honest, honourable man, but that 'moderation! moderation!' is the burden of the song among the body. For myself, I am resolved to be in earnest for the country, and shall be a scarecrow of violence to the gentle warblers of the grove, the moderate whigs and temperate statesmen."

By a persevering, compromising conduct—by what is called listening to the voice of prudence, and holding what is termed a judicious course, he would have entitled himself to a place among the practical men whom political speculators are prone to follow, because they show the way to get, and enable them to keep, office. He would have been in place as many years of his life as he was months in real power; would have served his prince half his time, instead of reigning over his country, to her infinite glory and his own immortal fame, for a short season. Well! he would at last have quitted office and its sweets; he would have sunk into the grave sincerely lamented by his followers trembling for their situations, passionately deplored by party expectants made desperate by the prostration of their hopes. Behind him he would have left the fame of a brilliant orator, a successful cultivator of ambition; but the annals of England would not have had to boast of that name by which her political history now shines with the most resplendent lustre.

In a former article, we adverted to the doubts cast by some upon the nature of the complaint under which Lord Chatham laboured at different times, but especially during his last administration. The account given of it was, a suppressed or unfixed gout; and the story built on this account, ascribed his complaint to insanity. The ground of the suspicion was his remaining so long inaccessible to his colleagues, and most of his friends, while attended by his physicians. With the accustomed consistency of party fabrication, there was at the same time another story stated. The whole was a sham, a fraud, a political illness, as an excuse for neglecting his duty in parliament, and estranging himself from the councils of his feeble colleagues, and escaping the responsibility of his station; for it was not enough that the heaviest of all the visitations of Providence should be said to have fallen upon that great intellect; he must be held up as equally despicable and pitiable; described not merely as a madman, but a cheat. No matter how impossible the two things were to co-exist; no matter how entirely the one falsehood exposed the other—

some might swallow one, some the other; nay, some might be found ready to approve their faith by believing both.

The letters now before us, throw a clear and steady light on this question, and to them we direct the reader's attention. It was at one time supposed that Lord Chatham, like other men of genius, was of the temperament so often found united to that great but perilous gift; that he was of a melancholic or hypochondriac habit, united with fits of low spirits, which made him shun society, or possessing his powers of application, or his fits of fancy irregularly, so as not to have at all times the same faculty of exertion, or to exert his talents with the same felicity. Collins and Thompson are well known to have suffered under such inequalities. Milton's immortal verse never flowed between the autumnal and vernal equinox; but, mute in winter, his song was awakened by the temperature that made the groves, too, vocal. But the letters now published, show clearly that a wandering and ill declared gout was the sole cause of Lord Chatham's long and distressing malady. It fell upon his nerves, and made him, though in perfect possession of his great faculties, unable to exert them without serious risk to his life. Even writing a common letter was too much for him; and when he was compelled to do any, the least active business, he was overset for days. The accounts given by Lady Chatham from time to time of his condition are of this kind: To Lord Camden she writes, 23d January 1768, "The state of extreme weakness and illness in which my lord finds himself, from the gout not being fixed, obliges him to beg leave of your lordship to acknowledge by my hand, the honour of your much obliging letter." (Vol. iii. p. 317.) In a memorandum in his handwriting of a conversation held Oct. 9, 1768, with the Duke of Grafton, then first lord of the treasury, Lord Chatham being really prime minister, though only privy seal, we find her giving his grace this description of her husband's situation: "I must confess, from the length of my lord's illness, and the manner in which the gout is dispersed upon his habit, that I believe that there is but small prospect of his

ever being able to enter much again into business." (Vol. iii. p. 337.) During the many months that this dreadful malady continued, the ministry, whose whole reliance was upon the power of his mighty name, were unceasing in their attempts to obtain the farther benefit of his advice, or rather orders, and often were fain to entreat a token of countenance to increase their weight with the country. In general, indeed, almost always, they found him unable to hold the least communication with them. Sometimes, however, their difficulties pressed so sorely upon them, that they were obliged to become more urgent than usual; and, independent of the consenting letters, which were, by the style all plainly from himself, though written in Lady Chatham's hand, the most decisive evidence of his faculties being entire, is afforded by his consenting to see the Duke of Grafton, with whom he had more interviews than one. It will be at once the most satisfactory contradiction to all the stories of his insanity—the most curious information which can be given upon the relation between the cabinet and its most powerful, though inactive member—the most striking picture of the king's entire reliance upon him—and the most remarkable illustration of the power still residing in his great name, if we transcribe one or two of the letters that passed between the parties on one of these occasions. Let it be premised that, at the time when all parties believed his authority to have such weight, and when all looked up to him for a sign intimating his pleasure, he had been for four months wholly incapable, not only of transacting any business, but even of seeing any colleague, or doing more in the way of correspondence than dictating a few notes to refuse all interviews. He continued for a year and a half longer in the same condition; and all the anxiety of the king and the cabinet, was to prevent the calamity of his resigning—that is of his name, the only part of him they possessed, being withdrawn from their government.

On the 27th of May, 1767, the Duke of Grafton states, the ministerial majority to have been only 65 to 63 of the opposition the night before, and expresses himself

most "anxious to have more conversation with him." "If," (says he,) "I could be allowed but a few moments to wait on you, it would give me great relief; for the moment is too critical for your lordship's advice and direction not to be necessary. If, therefore, you allow me one quarter of an hour to intrude upon you, without prejudice to your health, it will greatly oblige me."

Lord Chatham's answer, in his wife's hand, is as follows:—

"Lord Chatham, still unable to write, begs leave to assure the Duke of Grafton of his best respects, and at the same time to lament that the continuation of his illness reduces him to the painful necessity of most earnestly entreating his grace to pardon him, if he begs to be allowed to decline the honour of the visit the Duke of Grafton has so kindly proposed. Nothing can be so great an affliction to him as to find himself quite unable for a conversation, which he should otherwise be proud and happy to embrace."

Disappointed in this application, the Duke then consulted the Lord President, Lord Camden, Lord Chatham's confidential friend, and both severally laid before the king their opinion of the state of his government, and their inability to conduct it if deprived of all communication with the great man. The king, as the duke wrote to him, has unabated confidence in his own affairs, if he can either have the "presence or the advice of Lord Chatham;" and both the duke and President having conferred together by the king's advice, the result is a communication to Lord Chatham that his counsel alone can relieve them, but that "with his commands," and in execution of them, they will agree to go on. Here is his answer, also, in his wife's hand:—

"Lord Chatham, continuing under the same inability to ~~which~~ he was under the unhappy necessity of conveying to the Duke of Grafton so lately, begs again his ~~grace's~~ indulgence for taking this method of repeating

the same description of his health, which for the present renders business *impossible* for him.

“He implores the Duke of Grafton to be persuaded that nothing less than *impossibility* prevents him from seeing the Duke of Grafton, which he so ardently desires, and entering into the fullest conversation with his grace. At present, all he is able to offer, in true zeal for his Majesty, is, that the Duke of Grafton and Lord President may not finally judge it necessary to leave the situations they are in. The first moment health and strength enough return, Lord Chatham will humbly request permission to renew at his majesty’s feet all the sentiments of duty and most devoted attachment.”

Upon this the king comes down to the assistance of his distracted ministry, and writes himself the following remarkable and characteristic letter to Lord Chatham:—

“LORD CHATHAM,

“No one has more cautiously avoided writing to you than myself, during your late indisposition; but the moment is so extremely critical, that I cannot possibly delay it any longer. By the letter you received yesterday from the Duke of Grafton, you must perceive the anxiety he and the president at present labour under. The chancellor is very much in the same situation. This is equally owing to the majority in the House of Lords, amounting on the Friday only to six and on the Tuesday to three, though I made two of my brothers vote on both those days; and to the great coldness shown those three ministers by Lord Shelburne, whom they, as well as myself, imagine to be rather a secret enemy; the avowed enmity, of Mr. Townshend; and the resolution of lieutenant-general Conway to retire, though without any view of entering into faction.

“My firmness is not dismayed by these unpleasant appearances; for, from the hour you entered into office, I have uniformly relied on your firmness to act in defiance to that hydra faction, which has never appeared

to the height in now does, till within these few weeks. Though your relations, the Bedfords, and the Rockinghams are joined, with intention to storm my closet, yet, if I was mean enough to submit, they own they would not join in forming an administration; therefore, nothing but confusion could be obtained.

"I am strongly of opinion with the answer you sent the Duke of Grafton; but, by a note I have received from him, I fear I cannot keep him above a day, unless you would see him and give him encouragement. Your duty and affection for my person, your own honour, call on you to make an effort: five minutes' conversation with you would raise his spirits, for his heart is good; mine, I thank Heaven, wants no rousing: my love to my country, as well as what I owe to my own character and to my family, prompt me not to yield to faction. Be firm, and you will find me ready to take as active a part as the hour seems to require. Though none of my ministers stand by me, I cannot truckle.

"I wish a few lines in answer, as I am to have the Duke of Grafton with me this evening; and if you cannot come to me to-morrow, I am ready to call at north-end on my return that evening to this place. Whilst I have sixty-five present and thirty proxies in the House of Lords ready to stand by me, besides a majority of 151 since that, in the House of Commons, against 84, though the secretary of state and the chancellor of the exchequer were in the minority, I think the game easy, if you either come out or will admit very few people.

"GEORGE R."

Lord Chatham, in his answer, prefers seeing the Duke of Grafton. He sends a formal letter to that effect, but also the explanatory one, which will be read with a tender interest by all the admirers of genius, and all who can feel for the ravages which bodily illness makes on the strength of the mind, as far as regards exertion.

"Lord Chatham most humbly begs leave to lay him-

self with all duty at the king's feet, and fearing lest he may not have rightly apprehended his majesty's most gracious commands, humbly entreats his majesty to permit him to say, that, seeing the duke of Grafton to-morrow morning, he understands it not to be his majesty's pleasure, that he should attend his majesty any part of the day to-morrow. He is unhappily obliged to confess, that the honour and weight of such an audience would have been more than he could sustain, in his present extreme weakness of nerves and spirits. He begs to pour forth again the deepest sense of his majesty's boundless condescension and goodness, and implore that, in compassion for his state, his majesty would be pleased to grant him some farther time for recovery."

The subsequent letters show that he had this interview, and a second with the duke. But the king having sent a very kind note to inquire after his health, and to express a hope that the exertion he had made did not prove hurtful, the answer is, that they had. Immediately after the king applies to him again, in consequence of a still more critical state of his government, and adds,

"Upon the whole, I earnestly call upon you to lay before me a plan, and also to speak to those you shall propose for responsible offices. You owe this to me, to your country, and also to those who have embarked in administration with you. If after this you again decline taking an active part, I shall then lie under a necessity of taking steps, that nothing but the situation I am left in could have obliged to.

"GEORGE R."

The earl's answer is as follows :

"Lord Chatham, totally incapable from an increase of illness to use his pen, most humbly begs leave to lay himself with all duty and submission at the king's feet, and with unspeakable affliction again to represent to his majesty the most unhappy and *utter disability* which

his present state of health as yet continues to lay him under; and once more most humbly to implore compassion and pardon from his majesty, for the cruel situation which still deprives him of the possibility of activity, and of proving to his majesty the truth of an unfeigned zeal, in the present moment rendered useless."

His majesty then prescribes a physician for his afflicted minister; and is respectfully and thankfully intreated to leave him in Dr. Addington's hands, who "gives him the strongest assurances of recovering with proper time." The prediction is gradually but completely verified, and at length the patient's health is restored so as to suffer little more than ordinary gout, which ten years later, as is well known, brought his illustrious life to a close.

It is manifest from all these documents that nothing could be more false than the stories of the earl's insanity. *First*, When his colleagues wrote letters to him treating him as a perfectly sane person, it is clear that they had sufficient information, through the usual channels, of his situation. *Secondly*, The answers they received regularly, though Lady Chatham's hand, were manifestly dictated by himself. *Thirdly*, When he was at the very worst, he wrote to the king in his own hand. And *Lastly*, At the same period of greatest exacerbation of his malady, he twice had interviews with his colleagues on state affairs.

Here, for the present, we close these imperfect portraits. To complete the group which we have undertaken to represent to our countrymen in the present day, some striking figures remain to be added. Sir Robert Walpole and Mr. Pulteney, Lord Bolingbroke and Sir William Wyndham, in Lord Chatham's earliest years; Lord Camden, Lord Hardwicke, and Charles Townshend, towards the middle of his history: Dunning, and Lee, and some lesser men, towards its concluding scene, will furnish matter for much reflection as well as food for some curiosity before we finally quit this subject.

Before dismissing the subject, however, we must be

permitted to add, that these chapters of commentary upon the political history of the country have been composed, not only without the least desire to serve the purposes of party, but rather with the intention, first, of showing how dangerous is the abuse of party principle; and next and chiefly, of setting before the people the great duty of forming their own opinions, and before statesmen the paramount obligations under which they are laid, by the position they volunteer to occupy:—obligations that make it a great crime to neglect, for any selfish or any factious consideration, the duties they owe to the improvement of their fellow-citizens. We are well aware that they who attack party, or make a stand against its unthinking violence, expose themselves to the united assaults of all the factious of the day. But we are also convinced that, without at all undervaluing the important services which the principle of party association is calculated to render, its abuses are most carefully to be guarded against; and of this we are quite certain, that a better service cannot be rendered to the people, than to show them how they may most safely as well as most beneficially avail themselves of the advice of great statesmen, namely, by looking to them and taking counsel with them, but also by thinking and resolving for themselves, so as to prevent their councillors from becoming their masters, and administering the state affairs not for the country's benefit but their own.

CONGRES DE VERONE.*

[From the Edinburgh Review.]

THE literary and political world had for some time been occupied with rumours of an extensive work by M. De Chateaubriand, upon his own life and times, when these volumes were announced, having a very limited subject; and we now find, from the statement in the preface, that they form no part of the memoirs. These, says our author, contain only what may be said during his lifetime; the rest must be reserved till after his decease—or, to use his own words, “à la tombe le reste.”• He adds, that he now speaks of his political life, for the first and last time. We doubt this; not that we at all disbelieve him, but that we suspect he will, like most authors, find reason to change his mind; especially when he sees ground for suspecting that, very possibly, the interest taken in him after his demise may be so much disunited, as to render the publication of a large work upon his personal history a speculation of doubtful prudence.

M. Chateaubriand, however, must be allowed to hold a very considerable rank, both among the literary and the political men of his time. His eloquence is of a fervid and striking cast; often very successful; fre-

* *Congres de Verone, Guerre d'Espagne, Negociations, Colonies Espagnoles.* Par M. De Chateaubriand. 2 tomes, 8vo. Paris: 1838.

quently inflated, indeed, and somewhat apt to become dull and whining; but displaying much power over the language of his country, and showing no little resources of fancy. As a politician, how widely soever we may differ with him, it is impossible to deny that he has been consistent and to all appearance honest. His last act confirms all former impressions upon this cardinal point; for he, and a few others, unable conscientiously to approve of the revolution in 1830, yet unwilling to maintain a vexatious struggle against the new government, have quitted the scene of public affairs, and, resigning all objects of ambition, or even of parliamentary display, have buried themselves in the shade of a premature retirement.

There has never been wanting, too, in this gentleman, the courage to avow his principles, how unpopular soever; and the present work affords a sufficiently remarkable instance of this disposition. Few parts of the policy pursued by the government of the restoration, have been more in conflict with the universal opinion of the public, both in France and in Europe generally, than the Spanish war of 1823; undertaken avowedly, to destroy the free constitution which the Spaniards had given themselves, and to replace Ferdinand upon an absolute throne. Among the people of every country, this crusade was regarded with abhorrence; it was only among despotic princes and their ministers that it found defenders. The vile and hateful character of the Spaniards had not been sufficiently unfolded to destroy the interest taken in their fortunes; the blood-thirsty disposition, the disgusting cruelties and treachery of vulgar tyrants, had not given a kind of comparative advantage to the more limited wickedness of individual despotism; and even if these recent times have, since the period of the war against the Cortes, made men care little whether the Castilian soil is drenched in blood by one party or the other, the feeling is still very prevalent, that no foreign power has a right to interfere with the people, and dictate to them by force of arms what conduct they shall pursue in the administration of their own affairs. The approvers of the holy allies and their abominable

war, still remain few in number; and even the party most willing to defend them in France, in England, and elsewhere, venture to say very little in favour of the doctrine of intervention. Yet it is as the champion of those combined despots, the advocate of their very worst principles, the defender of their most odious acts, that M. Chateaubriand now stands forward. Nay, he avows himself the author of the Spanish war; and not merely as having drawn France into executing the decrees of the allies, but as having sanctioned those allies themselves to undertake the crusade. He is more than their advocate; he does far more than defend them. He plants himself in their places—posting himself in the eyes of the world on the “bad eminence” of having been the author of the deed which all men condemn. “It was not they, but I,” he cries; and, while the policy of 1823 is assailed on all hands with the shouts of execration and the hiss of scorn, he steps forward and essays to make his voice heard, while he cries, amidst the wild uproar, *Adsum qui feci—mea fraus omnis!*

This book is by no means void of interest. It is really written with great cleverness, and although somewhat affected, and very much filled with egotism, as all such works must indeed be from their very nature, yet it is lively, and full of original pieces, in support of the author's statements respecting the important transactions in which he was engaged. Of the three parts into which it is divided—the Congress of Verona, the Spanish War and the Spanish Colonies—the first two are by far the most interesting; and it is to the matters relating to them that we shall feel it necessary to direct the reader's attention.

We must observe, however, in beginning the notice of his book, that we do not think M. Chateaubriand has proved quite so irrefragably as he supposes the position to which a great part of it is devoted; namely, that the holy allies were against the Spanish Invasion, and that he alone was its author. The phrases about peace which the allies so glibly used, both in their conferences and in their notes, and which cost them so very little, prove really nothing. As little is it decisive of the

question, that their celebrated three manifestoes to the Court of Madrid—intended, of course, for the Cortes—made no mention of war. They were all couched in language the most dictatorial and offensive; they all proceeded upon the assumption that their authors had a right to interfere with the Spanish people as to their choice of a constitution; they were all in a tone the most menacing, and plainly indicated that the Spaniards must choose between their own independence and a quarrel with the allies. What signifies it to say that a blustering fellow, when he puts on a threatening air, and rudely calls to account his peaceable neighbour, does not actually promise him “a bullet in his thorax,” or brandish a cudgel over his head? All men know what he means, and all men well enough understood the holy gentlemen of Verona. Their exploits at Laybach the year before, followed by immediate operations in Italy for the suppression of a representative government, left no room to doubt their meaning at Verona; but it is extremely probable that the unusual odium which those exploits had engendered made them more cautious of speech, and not impossible that they might also wish France now to act as if of her own accord. At all events, M. Chateaubriand cannot tell what past between the Nesselrodes, the Ancillons, and the Metternichs, in their conferences with the other French envoys. The words of M. Villele, then prime minister, in the chamber of deputies, are much discussed by our author, who denies that General Foy and M. Royer Collard put the right construction upon them. “We have only the alternative of either combating against the Spanish revolution in the Pyrenees, or defending it upon our own “northern frontier.” M. Chateaubriand relies mainly on the pronoun “*la*.” Quoi de plus evident, de plus clairement, de mieux exprimé? Remarquez bien ce pronom *la*, dans la leçon du General Foy; il se rapporte au mot *revolution*, non au mot *guerre*” (which, in truth, would be nonsense,) “non au mot *Europe*,” (which would be ridiculous; “c’est la revolution Espagnole qui nous aura bouleversés, et que nous serons appelés, à défendre sur le Rhin,” &c. Was there ever such trifling?

But, also, was there ever any self-refutation more complete? For it is not *revolution*, but *Spanish revolution* that they were to defend; and yet our author can gravely maintain, that by defending on the Rhine the Spanish revolution, his colleague and chief meant not the insurrection of Madrid and the government of the Cortes, but the revolution in France, which the contagious influence of Spanish principles might possibly have brought about. In short, he makes *la*, because it refers to a Spanish revolution then actually born, nay, half-a-year old and more, to typify a French revolution not even in embryo, but which that Spanish one might beget when it came to maturity, if not strangled in the cradle! We venture to say that the pronoun *la*, or any other, never before had so heavy a task imposed upon it as to bear all this meaning. The interpretation of Lord Burleigh's nod in the "Critic" is a joke to this. "What! does it really mean all this?"—"O yes! and a good deal more."—"Dear me! I never should have guessed it!"

We must fairly confess that the merit of this book, to our taste, consists, much less in the serious discussions than in the anecdotes told in an agreeable and lively manner, which it contains. The interview which he had with that fallen woman, who had once the honour to share Napoleon's bed, is thus described:—

"Nous refusâmes d'abord une invitation de l'archiduchesse de Parme; elle insista, et nous y allâmes. Nous la trouvâmes fort gaie: l'univers s'étant chargé de se souvenir de Napoléon, elle n'avait plus la peine d'y songer. Nous lui dîmes que nous avions rencontré ses soldats à Plaisance, et qu'elle en avait autrefois d'avantage; elle répondit: "Je ne songe plus à cela." Elle prononça quelques mots légers, et comme en passant, sur le roi de Rome: elle était grosse. Sa cour avait un certain air délabré et vieilli, excepté M. Nieperg, homme de bon ton. Il n'y avait là de singulier que nous dînant auprès de Marie-Louise, et les bracelets faits de la pierre du sarcophage de Juliette, que portait la veuve de Napoléon.

"En traversant le Pô, à Plaisance, une seule barque

nouvellement peinte, portant une espèce de pavillon impérial, frappa nos regards; deux ou trois dragons, en veste et en bonnet de police, faisaient boire leurs chevaux; nous entrions dans les états de Marie-Louise: c'est tout ce qui restait de la puissance de l'homme qui fendit les rochers du Simplon, planta ses drapeaux sur les capitales de l'Europe, releva l'Italie prosternée depuis tant de siècles. Bouleversez donc le monde, occupez de votre nom les quatre parties de la terre, sortez des mers de l'Europe, élancez-vous jusqu'au ciel, at allez tomber pour mourir à l'extrémité des flots de l'Atlantique: vous n'aurez pas fermé les yeux, qu'un voyageur passera le Pô et verra ce que nous avons vu."

Unworthy creature! and as foolish as base! Whilst her illustrious husband was pining under a treatment more impolitic even than it was cruel, and more senseless still than it was impolitic, she never heaved a sigh for his fate, nor cast an eye of affection towards the rock to which flinty-hearted men* had chained him. While the other members of his family, on whom it was so much less incumbent, and some of whom in the caprice of unlimited power, he had used moderately well, wearied gods and men with their instances to be allowed the sad privilege of sharing his sufferings, she on whom his eye had never beamed but in love and courtesy—she, wrapped up in the stupid indulgences of Germanic etiquette, but not satiated with these, must give her person up to the first Austrian soldier that approached her, and by whom, according to the above passage, she was occupied in the disgusting office of breeding half-brothers to the son of Napoleon. For that son, it seems, by this same passage, she retained as much affection as for his great father—showing herself to be as unnatural

* Οὐ γὰρ πῶς τίθηκεν ἐπὶ χθονὶ διὸς Ὀδυσσεύς,
 Ἄλλ' ἐπὶ πρὸς ζῶος κατερυκεῖται εὐρὺ πόντῳ
 Νῆσῳ ἐν ἀμφίρρουτ' ἡλεποὶ δὲ μὲν ἀνδρὲς ἔχουσιν.

Hom. Od. A.

This is not our citation; it is the admirable one of Lord Holland, whose noble conduct and that of his family towards the illustrious exile, worthy of his name is above all praise.

a parent as she is a grovelling and degenerate consort. The reader will be pleased to observe that this revolting picture of legitimacy comes not from our hand. It is drawn by the powerful and loyal pencil of the Austrian Emperor's friend and correspondent—the chivalrous, the romantic champion of the old dynasties of Europe—who has sacrificed himself for the Duchess of Berri's house, and has prostrated himself before that of the other woman, whose name shall not soil our page except in M. Chateaubriand's periods.

There is a passage, however, respecting the Austrian policy towards the illustrious sufferers in the Milanese, which should redeem our author from the censures drawn down upon him from the liberal party, by his devotion, often quite blind and unreflecting, to legitimacy. Speaking of Prince Metternich, whose general character he extols in terms as laudatory as those used by Mrs. Trollope herself,* though his conduct in particular instances is not much to his mind, he remarks, “L’Autriche s’applaudit trop de ses succès contre les Révolutionnaires de l’Italie; sa peur lui faisant voir des conspirateurs là où il n’y avoit que le mouvement progressif

* *A propos* of the mention of this clever lady, we may though hardly worth while, give our readers one proof of the authority due to the statements contained in her lately published work, entitled “Vienna and the Austrians.” “When speaking,” she tells us, “of our apparent geographical acquaintance with their country, one gentleman showed us a number of the Edinburgh Review—I forget the precise date, but it was, I think, about five years ago—in which Prague was spoken of as the capital of Hungary. The *bévue* had caused considerable amusement at the time, which was not lessened, as he told us, by the sequel. An Austrian (well known, by the way, in England) wrote to the editor of the Review as soon as this remarkable statement met his eye, requesting him very civilly to restore to Bohemia her much-loved capital. The editor politely answered the letter, acknowledging, as my informant said, that after due inquiry made, it had been satisfactorily ascertained that Prague was in truth the capital of Bohemia, and not of Hungary but that it was their principle never to contradict themselves, and therefore that they must beg to decline doing so on the present occasion. This letter is said to be very carefully preserved as a literary curiosity.”—If truth be at all necessary to the value of this “literary curiosity,” we fear we shall deprive it of that recommendation; for we must inform Mrs. Trollope, and her learned friend that the above statement is wholly destitute of foundation. So much for this pleasant *bévue*. .

des idées d'une nation impatiente gu joug étranger, et privée de sa nationalité par la conquête. On ne pouvoit penser comme M. de Metternich, quand on voyoit passer à Verone des Cages de l'ordre et du bonheur, qui empa-
 teraient à Spillberg Silvio Pellico, avec ce que l'Italie renfermait de plus eclaire et de plus distingué dans son sein." (I. 96.) We are persuaded that if such men as our author, and his diplomatic coadjutors at Verona, had strongly, and plainly, and earnestly represented to Prince Metternich and his master, how entirely they disapproved of those most cruel and most tyrannical proceedings, which it thus appears that they witnessed with their own eyes—and had shown them, as they very easily might, the infinite mischiefs resulting from thence to their own character in Europe, and to the security of their own power in Austria as well as in Italy—much more would have been effected for the cause of legitimacy, and far more effectual resistance opposed to the progress of revolutionary principles, than by all the conferences of which Verona and Laybach were the seats, and all the threats of vengeance which were ever recorded in Germanic protocols, or executed beyond the Pyrenees.

A very interesting note appended to the second volume shows, that our author's prejudices are not so strong as to alienate him from real merit, or make him distrust integrity in political adversaries. He appears to have been the friend of M. Carrel, whose sterling honesty was only exceeded by his brilliant talents, and whose untimely loss every friend of freedom has deplored. An admirable letter of his is given, showing the footing on which these eminent men were. We extract the concluding portion of it, after remarking how natural it is, and how pleasing also, that persons, however widely opposed in opinions, yet sincerely holding them, and guiding their conduct by their principles, should respect one another, and be found to live on more friendly terms together than they can bear to do with the selfish beings who band themselves in parties for their own gain at the expense of the community,

assume the outward appearance of opinions which they are entirely indifferent about, and, having worn as a mask, soon lay aside, and act the part of defending some great and sacred cause only that they may betray it for their own behoof.

“Ce que vous avez voulu depuis trente ans, Monsieur, ce que je voudrais, s’il m’est permis de me nommer après vous c’est d’assurer aux intérêts qui se partagent notre belle France une loi de combat plus humaine, plus civilisée, plus fraternelle, plus concluante que la guerre civile, et il n’y a que la discussion qui puisse détrôner la guerre civile. Quand donc réussirons-nous à mettre en présence les idées à la place des partis, et les intérêts légitimes et avouables à la place des déguisements de l’égoïsme et de la cupidité ? Quand verrons-nous s’opérer par la persuasion et par la parole ces inévitables transactions que le duel des partis et l’effusion du sang amènent aussi par épuisement, mais trop tard pour les morts des deux camps, et trop souvent pour les blessés et les survivants ? Comme pour le dites douloureusement, Monsieur, il semble que bien des enseignements aient été perdus, et qu’on ne sache plus en France ce qu’il en coûte de se réfugier sous un despotisme qui promet silence et repos. Il n’en faut pas moins continuer de parler, d’écrire, d’imprimer ; il sort quelquefois des ressources bien imprévues de la constance. Aussi de tant de beaux exemples que vous avez donnés, Monsieur, celui que j’ai le plus constamment sous les yeux est compris dans un mot : Persévérer.

“Agréez, Monsieur, les sentiments d’inaltérable affection avec lesquels je suis heureux de me dire votre plus dévoué serviteur,

“A CARREL.”

The following singular passage is in M. Chateaubriand’s best style, and, with all its faults, is certainly very striking :—

“Nous étions pendant les cent jours avec le roi : le 18 Juin 1815, vers midi, nous sortîmes de Gand par la

porte de Bruxelles; nous allâmes seul nous promener sur le grand chemin: nous avons emporté les *Commentaires de César*, et nous cheminions lentement, plongé dans la lecture. Nous étions déjà à plus d'une lieue de la ville, lorsque nous crûmes ouïr un roulement sourd. Nous nous arrêtàmes, nous regardâmes le ciel assez chargé de nuées, délibérant en nous-meme si nous continuerions d'aller en avant, ou si nous nous rapprocherions de Gand, dans la crainte d'un orage. Nous prêtâmes l'oreille; nous n'entendîmes plus que le cri d'une poule d'eau dans les joncs et le son d'une horloge de village: nous poursuivîmes notre route. Nous n'avions pas fait trente pas que le roulement recommença, tantôt bref, tantôt long et à intervalles inégaux: quelquefois il n'était sensible que par une trepidation de l'air laquelle se communiquait à la terre sur ces plaines immenses, tant il était éloigné. Ces détonations, moins vastes, moins onduleuses, moins liées ensemble que celles de la foudre, firent naître dans notre esprit l'idée d'un combat. Nous nous trouvions devant un peuplier planté à l'angle d'un champ de houblon; nous traversâmes le chemin, et nous nous appuyâmes debout contre le tronc de l'arbre; le visage tourné du côté de Bruxelles. Un vent du sud s'étant levé, nous apporta plus distinctement le bruit de l'artillerie. Cette grande bataille encore sans nom, dont nous écoutions les échos au pied d'un peuplier, et dont une horloge de village venait de sonner les funérailles inconnues, était la bataille de Waterloo!"

It is painful to dispel a pleasing illusion; but this passage must be referred to the class of poetical, and not historical compositions. The wind, which had blown on the 16th June so that the firing at the battle of Quatrebras was heard at Brussels, had changed before the great fight of the 18th, and even at Brussels the cannonade of Waterloo could not be heard; much less could it have reached Ghent, and interrupted our author in his study (a somewhat fruitless one it should seem) of that very simple and accurate chronicler of events, Julius Cæsar. This is very far from being the only instance which these volumes afford of the lively fancy

which predominates in their poetical author. He sets down the appointment of Fouché by the restored government to the Duke of Wellington's account, stating the nomination as his, and his only. It is well known to have been the work of the Count d'Artois, afterwards Charles X., and the god of the Chateaubriand party's idolatry.

We hardly think that Mr. Canning is fairly treated in this publication. Indeed, we do not at all agree with M. Chateaubriand as to the line which separates letters fit to be published, from such as are confidential, and to be kept secret. A person's decease gives no right of proclaiming to the world all that he may have communicated confidentially to his private friend. But, at any rate, the whole correspondence or none of it should be given. Now, it is pretty evident from the letters here printed, that many more of both parties are kept back; and the inference drawn from the internal evidence of the book itself, is confirmed by the information which we happened to possess upon this subject. However, it must be admitted, that upon the whole, the sincerity, as well as the sound judgment of our distinguished countryman are abundantly proved by what he writes to the French minister upon his favourite scheme, the Spanish war. Mr. Canning's letter of February 7, 1823, plainly shows how earnestly he deprecated that measure of injustice and folly; the immediate success of which has not proved any extenuation of its demerits in the eyes of every honest and right-thinking person; and the remote effects of which may easily be traced in the revolution which Mr. Canning did not live to see.

M. CANNING A M. DE CHATEAUBRIAND.

“ London, February 7, 1823.

“ I scarcely know how to write to you to-day, my dear M. de Chateaubriand. I hesitate between the duty of sincerity, and the fear of offence; till I have almost a mind not to write at all. But there is no end of such difficulties; or rather if such difficulties are suffered to prevail, there

is an end of our correspondence. And *that*, I may say without flattery to you, or vanity on my own part, would, in the present crisis of affairs, be a national, if not an *European* misfortune. I write, therefore, and will write the truth; subject, I am afraid to some possible misconstruction, and to the risk of what may be distasteful, but with no other intention (*ita me Dens adjuvet*) than that of consulting your ease and honour as well as of my own, and the interests of both our governments; and in the confidence that even, if you distrust my judgment, you cannot doubt my friendship.

“Well, then, to begin at once with what is most unpleasant to utter, you have united the opinions of this whole nation, *as those of one man*, against France. You have excited against the present sovereign of that kingdom, the feelings which were directed against the *usurper* of France and Spain, in 1808; nay, the consent, I am grieved to say, is *more* perfect now than on that occasion; for then the Jacobins were loath to inculpate their idol; now, they, and the whigs and tories, from one end of the country to the other, are all one way. Surely such a spontaneous and universal burst of national sentiment must lead any man, or any set of men, who are acting in opposition to it, to *doubt* whether they are acting quite right. The government has not on this occasion *led* the public; quite otherwise. The language of the government, has been peculiarly measured and temperate; and its discretion far more guarded than usual; so much so, that the mass of the nation were in suspense as to the opinions of the government; and that portion of the daily press usually devoted to them, was (for some reasons better known, perhaps, on your side of the water than on ours) turned in a directly opposite course. I was not without expectation of such an ebullition. M. de Marcellus will probably have told you that I did express such an expectation to him; and that I assured him of my perfect conviction that if the word “neutrality” had found its way into the speech, we should have had to combat the combined efforts of all parties in the House of Commons, to get rid of it. Even if you distrust us, what hinders

your negotiating for yourselves? Only negotiate, at least, before you invade.

"Ever, my dear M. de Chateaubriand, with the sincerest regard and admiration, yours,

"G. CANNING."

The following anecdote is a somewhat laughable misapprehension of our author:—

"Un mot échappé à M. Canning, lorsqu'à propos d'un discours de M. Brougham et lorsqu'il nous crut fourvoyé dans l'affaire de la Péninsule, montre les sentiments que nous portaient nos rivaux; il s'écria dans sa joie—"Tu l'as voulu, Georges Dandin! tu l'as voulu, mon ami!" Et pourtant il ne nous croyait pas assez stupide pour n'avoir rien compris aux notes du Duc de Wellington, puisqu'après avoir reçu une lettre de félicitations que nous lui écrivîmes sur sa nomination de Ministre des Affaires Etrangères, il nous adressa à Vérone la réponse suivante."

The letter which follows is one of very polite, and, perhaps, hearty congratulation to M. Chateaubriand, upon his elevation to the ministry in October, 1822, which there is no occasion to extract, as it contains nothing at all remarkable. But the total misapprehension of the anecdote, by either his author or himself, is inconceivable. The fact was this, and every one in the political world at the time knew it well:—M. Marcellus, the French Charge d'Affairs, was sitting under the gallery when Mr. Brougham made his attack upon the holy alliance and the Spanish war. Mr. Canning, who had warned the French ministry repeatedly against the infatuation of the conduct then pursued, and who had, moreover, given the charge d'affairs a special warning not to be present when the attack was expected to be made, spoke to him, as he passed, the words from Molière, which M. Chateaubriand has quoted as correctly, as he has completely misapprehended their application.

Our author has, in one *most* important part of his work, the observations upon the Congress of Vienna

(beginning with the words, "*La demagogie étouffée*," Vol. i. p. 370,) committed some important mistakes;—mistakes, indeed, so gross, that it requires the utmost charity to believe them, wholly unconnected with his party prejudices. In the first place, he attributes to that congress, resolutions taken and carried into effect by the treaty of November 20, 1815, signed at Paris, and not at Vienna. So great an error is quite unaccountable in M. Chateaubriand, or any man who had filled the station of minister for foreign affairs. Can it be necessary to remind such a person, that nothing whatever relating to the territorial arrangements of France, was discussed or determined at Vienna? By the treaty of May 30, 1814, concluded at a moment when Paris and three-fourths of all France were occupied by the allied armies, France was not only suffered to retain her boundaries of 1792, but even to gain, partly by rectification of frontiers, partly by actual cession (as of the department of Montblanc and the county of Venaissin,) an augmentation of territory to the extent of 150 square miles, and having a population of 450,000 souls. She also was allowed to keep possession of those precious objects of art, and remains of antiquity, which were the spoils of all the wars both of the empire and the republic; and, moreover, the invading armies had evacuated her territories within six weeks from the conclusion of the peace. We may fairly ask M. Chateaubriand, if his diplomatic skill in the service of the legitimate Bourbons would ever have succeeded in obtaining more favourable terms for his country, at a time when she was exhausted by the unparalleled efforts of a twenty years' war, and invaded at almost all points of her surface? It was no doubt after, and in consequence of the treaty of May 1814, that the congress of Vienna was holden; but it is not the less certain, that the affairs of France, properly so called, never formed any part of its object or of its deliberations.

France was represented at Vienna by the statesman who had obtained the terms of the treaty of Paris—terms which were certainly the most advantageous that

could be got for her, and far better than could have been expected, in the unfortunate position in which the policy of Napoleon and the chance of war had left her. It was by the talents, and by the ascendancy of the great statesman alluded to (M. Talleyrand,) that France regained and kept, from the very opening of the Vienna negotiations, her former weight and influence in European affairs, which Napoleon and the war had seemed to shake to its very foundations. Now all these facts were so notorious to the whole world, that we may fairly wonder, if M. Chateaubriand, the poet, felt himself justified in perverting or discolouring them while composing the Epic of his own glory, how M. Chateaubriand, the head of the foreign department, could ever have forgotten matters so remarkable, which he must at one time have so well known.

Hitherto we have only spoken of what, however gross, may yet be termed an innocent error in point of fact. We must now make mention of a more serious fault, because the mis-statement, quite as gross, wears also the aspect of calumny, and of a calumny most grave and odious in its import, though launched with a levity and indifference wholly unjustifiable. In the following passage, the French negotiator is directly accused of the most foul corruption, with as much carelessness as if the question had been of making a common blunder in politics, or a slip in a speech:—"Une fois redevenus puissants au moyen de nos succès dans la Peninsule, il eut été aisé de ramener le Czar à ses anciennes notions d'équité, on pouvait entraîner la Prusse en reprenant l'arrangement de la Saxe, abandonnée au Congrès de Vienne, *pour un pot de vin de quatre millions.*"—(Vol. I., p. 373.) To such of our readers as are ignorant of the French phrase, we may mention that *Pot-de-vin* is the court expression for bribe; and, that this passage directly charges those who represented France at Vienna, with having taken a bribe of four millions of francs, or £160,000 sterling, for abandoning the former arrangement of Saxony.

To rebut triumphantly this foul accusation, it is only necessary to make the reader consult the abridged His-

tory of *Treaties of Peace*, compiled by Messrs. Koch and Frederick Schoell. He will there find (Vol. xi., pp. 42 and 74,) the whole transactions relating to Saxony; and he will at once be enabled to judge of M. Chateaubriand's fidelity as an historian, and his justice as a commentator. We have preferred this work for reference, because it is composed with the most anti-Gallican opinions and feelings; because the authors show themselves throughout hostile to M. Talleyrand; and because, notwithstanding these prejudices, personal as well as national, the book has been received as an authority by the diplomatists of Europe in general; but is especially a favourite with the adversaries of M. Talleyrand and of his country.

It will be seen in the passages referred to, that the treaty of January 6, 1815, between France, Austria, England, the Netherlands and Bavaria, alone prevented Saxony from having been effaced from the map of Europe; and who is there, unless it be M. Chateaubriand, so ignorant, or so forgetful, as not to be aware that this treaty was the work of the French ambassador's skill in negotiation, and the fruit of his great authority with all the powers at the Congress? He who obtained and signed that treaty, was no doubt the same person who had obtained and signed the treaty of May, 1814; but he is also the same statesman who afterwards refused to retain office and emolument, and power, rather than set his hand to the treaty of November, 1815, by which France was dismembered, and given over to the occupation of foreign armies for five years. In reminding the reader of these things, no slight is intended upon the Duc de Richelieu's memory, who consented to sign the treaty of November. The devotion of that minister to his Master's service received the reward, some time after, of seeing the period of five years reduced to three. But, at any rate, it is nothing more than justice to give each person engaged in those great affairs his due measure of commendation; nor is it less than the most gross injustice to condemn M. Talleyrand for things which he not only never did, but never could have done; nay, for things which, notoriously

to all mankind, he sacrificed office rather than do; and of which he did the very reverse.

The calumny which we have been exposing brings us naturally to the contemplation of that remarkable person who is the object of its attack; and among the many that have figured in modern times, we shall in vain look for any one who presents a more interesting subject of study. His whole history was marked with strange peculiarities, from the period of infancy to the latest scenes of a life protracted to extreme, but vigorous and undecayed old age. Born to represent one of the most noble families in France, an accident struck him with incurable lameness; and the cruel habits of their pampered caste made his family add to this infliction the deprivation of his rank as eldest son. He was thus set aside for a brother whose faculties were far more crippled by nature than his own bodily frame had been by mischance; and was condemned to the ecclesiastical state, by way of at once providing for him, and getting rid of him. A powerful house, however, could not find in Old France much difficulty in securing promotion for one of its members in the church; be his disposition towards its duties ever so reluctant, or his capacity for performing them ever so slender. The young Perigord was soon raised over the heads of numberless pious men and profound theologians, and became Bishop of Autun, at an age when he had probably had little time for reflection upon his clerical functions, amidst the dissipations of the French capital; into which neither his personal misfortune, nor the domestic deposition occasioned by it, had prevented him from plunging with all the zeal of his strenuous and indomitable nature. His abilities were of the highest order; and the brilliancy with which they soon shone out, was well calculated to secure his signal success in Parisian society, where his rank would alone have gained him a high place; but where talents also, even in the humblest station, never failed to rise in the face of the aristocratic "genius of the place," and the habits of a nation of courtiers.

The great event of modern times now converted all Frenchmen into politicians—gave to state affairs the undisturbed monopoly of interest which the pleasures of society had before enjoyed—and armed political talents with the influence which the higher accomplishments of refined taste and elegant manners had hitherto possessed undivided and almost uncontrolled. M. Talleyrand did not long hesitate in choosing his part. He sided with the revolution party, and continued to act with them; joining those patriotic members of the clerical body who gave up their revenues to the demands of the country, and sacrificed their exclusive privileges to the rights of the community. But when the violence of the republican leaders, disdaining all bounds of prudence, or of justice, or of humanity, threatened to involve the whole country in anarchy and blood, he quitted the scene; and retired first to this country, where he passed a year or two, and then to America, where he remained until the more regular government of the executive directory tempered the violence of the revolution, and restored order to the state. Since that period he always filled the highest stations either at home or in the diplomatic service, except during a part of the restoration government, when the incurable folly of those princes who, as he said himself, had come back from their long exile without having either learnt or forgotten any thing, deemed it prudent to lay upon the shelf the ablest and most experienced man in the country, that their councils might have the benefit of being swayed by the ponnies and other imbecile creatures of their legitimate court.*

But it is from this constant employment of M. Talleyrand that the principal charge against the integrity of his political character has been drawn. The chief minister and councillor of the directory, he became suddenly the chief adviser of the consular government. When Napoleon took the whole power to himself he

* His resignation in 1815-16 was owing to the praiseworthy cause already stated; but the Bourbons never sought to draw him afterwards from his retirement.

continued his minister. When the independence of Switzerland was rudely invaded, he still presided over the department of foreign affairs. When the child and champion of Jacobinism had laid his parent prostrate in the dust, clothed himself with the imperial purple, maltreated the pope, and planted the iron crown of Italy on his brow, the republican ex-bishop remained in his service. When he who afterwards so eloquently avowed, that "general, consul, emperor, he owed all to the people, studied to discharge that debt by trampling on every popular right, the advocate of freedom was still to be seen by his side, and holding the pen through which all the rescripts of despotic power flowed. When the adopted Frenchman, who, with the dying accents of the same powerful and racy eloquence, desired that "his ashes might repose near the stream of the Seine, among the people whom he had so much loved," was testifying the warmth of his affection by such tokens as the merciless conscription, and breathing out his tenderness in proclamations of war that wrapped all France and all Europe in flame—the philosophic statesman, the friend of human improvement, the philanthropist who had speculated upon the nature of man, and the structure of government in both worlds, and had quitted his original profession because its claims were inimical to the progress of society—continued inseparably attached to the person of the military ruler, the warrior tyrant; and although he constantly tendered sounder advice than ever was followed, never scrupled to be the executor of ordinances which he then most disapproved.

The term of boundless, unreflecting and miscalculating ambition was hastened by its excesses; Napoleon was defeated; foreign powers occupied France; and the emperor's minister joined them to restore the Bourbons. With them he acted for some time, nor quitted them until they disclosed the self-destructive bent of their feeble and unprincipled minds—to rule by tools incapable of any acts but those of sycophancy and prostration, and animated by no spirit but that of blind and furious bigotry. The overthrow of the dynasty once more brought M. Talleyrand upon the scene; and he

has ever since been the most trusted, as the most valuable and skilful of all the new government's advisers; nor have the wisdom and the firmness of any counsels, except indeed those of the monarch himself, contributed so signally to the successful administration of that great prince, in the unparalleled difficulties of his truly arduous position.

That these well-known passages in M. Talleyrand's life indicate a disposition to be on the successful side, without any very nice regard to its real merits, can hardly be denied; and when facts, so pregnant with evidence, are before the reader, he has not merely materials for judging of the character to which they relate, but may almost be said to have had its lineaments presented to his view, without the aid of the historian's pencil to portray them. But the just discrimination of the historian is still wanting to complete the picture; both by filling up the outline, and by correcting it when hastily drawn from imperfect materials.—Other passages of the life may be brought forward; explanations may be given of doubtful actions; apparent inconsistencies may be reconciled; and charges which at first sight seemed correctly gathered from the facts, may be aggravated, extenuated, or repelled, by a more enlarged and a more judicial view of the whole subject. That the references fairly deduced from M. Talleyrand's public life can be wholly countervailed by any minuteness of examination, or explained away by any ingenuity of comment, it would be absurd to assert; yet it is only doing justice to comprise in our estimate of his merits, some things not usually taken into the account by those who censure his conduct, and who pronounce him—upon the view of his bearing part in such opposite systems of policy, and acting with such various combinations of party—to have been a person singularly void of public principle, and whose individual interest was always his god.

His conduct towards the order he belonged to has been remarked upon with severity. But to that order he owed only cruel and heartless oppression, and all for an accident that befell him in the cradle. He was not only disinherited, but he literally never was allowed

to sleep under his father's roof.—His demeanour in respect to sacred matters, unbecoming his profession as a priest, has called down censures of a far graver description. But he was made by force to enter a profession which he abhorred; and upon those who forced him, not upon himself, falls the blame of his conduct having been unsuited to the cloth which they compelled him to wear. It, moreover, is true, but it has been always forgotten in the attacks upon his ecclesiastical character, that he gallantly undertook the defence of his sacred order, at a time when such devotion to a most unpopular body exposed him to destruction; and that he went into exile, leaving his fortune behind; and subsisting, when abroad, upon the sale of his books. rather than be contaminated by any share whatever in the enormities of the first revolution, is a circumstance equally true and equally kept in the shade by his traducers. When the dissipations of his earlier years are chronicled, no allusion is ever made to the severity of his studies at the Sorbonne, where he was only known as a young man of haughty demeanour and silent habits, who lived buried among his books.

Unable to deny his wit, and overcome by the charms of his conversation, envious men have refused him even solid capacity, and more important services to society; but they have only been able to make this denial by forgetting the profound discourse upon lotteries which laid the foundation of his fame; and the works on public education, upon weights and measures, and upon colonial policy, which raised the superstructure.—No mitigation of the judgment pronounced upon his accommodating, or what has perhaps justly been called his time-serving, propensities, has ever been effected by viewing the courage which he showed in opposing Napoleon's Spanish war; the still more dangerous energy with which he defended the clerical body in his diocese at a time full of every kind of peril to political integrity; and his exclusion from power by the restored dynasty, whose return to the French throne was mainly the work of his hands, but whose service he quitted, rather than concur in a policy humiliating to his

country. Nor has any account been taken of the difficult state of affairs, and the imminent risk of hopeless anarchy on the one hand, or complete conquest on the other, to which France was exposed by the fortune of war and the hazards of revolution—an alternative presented to him in more than one of those most critical emergencies in which he was called to decide for his country as well as himself. Yet all these circumstances must be weighed together with the mere facts of his successive adhesion to so many governments, if we would avoid doing his memory the grossest injustice, and escape the most manifest error, in that fair estimate of his political virtue which it is our object to form.

But if the integrity of this famous personage be the subject of unavoidable controversy, and if our opinion regarding it must of necessity be clouded with some doubt, and at best be difficult satisfactorily to fix—upon the talents with which he was gifted, and his successful cultivation of them, there can be no question at all; and our view of them is unclouded and clear. His capacity was most vigorous and enlarged. Few men have ever been endowed with a stronger natural understanding: or have given it a more diligent culture, with a view to the pursuits in which he was to employ it. His singular acuteness could at once penetrate every subject; his clearness of perception at a glance unravelled all complications, and presented each matter distinct and unencumbered; his sound, plain, manly sense, at a blow got rid of all the husk, and pierced immediately to the kernel. A cloud of words was wholly thrown away upon him; he cared nothing for all the declamation in the world; ingenious topics, fine comparisons, cases in point, epigrammatic sentences, all passed innocuous over his head. So the storms of passion blew unheeded past one whose temper nothing could ruffle, and whose path towards his object nothing could obstruct. It was a lesson and a study, as well as a marvel, to see him disconcert, with a look of his keen eye, or a motion of his chin, a whole piece of wordy talk, and far-fetched and fine-spun argument, without condescending to utter, in the deep tones of his most powerful voice, so much

as a word or an interjection—far less to overthrow the flimsy structure with an irresistible remark, or consume it with a withering sarcasm.—Whoever conversed with him, or saw him in conversation, at once learnt both how dangerous a thing it was to indulge, before him, in loose prosing, or in false reasoning, or in frothy declamation: and how fatal an error he would commit who should take the veteran statesman's good-natured smile for an innocent insensibility to the ludicrous, and his apparently passive want of all effort for permanent indolence of mind. There are many living examples of persons not meanly gifted, who, in the calm of his placid society, have been wrecked among such shoals as these.

But his political sagacity was above all his other great qualities; and it was derived from the natural perspicacity to which we have adverted, and that consummate knowledge of mankind—that swift and sure tact of character—into which his long and varied experience had matured the faculties of his manly, yet subtle understanding. If never to be deluded by foolish measures, nor ever to be deceived by cunning men, be among the highest perfections of the practical statesman, where shall we look for any one who preferred higher claims to this character? But his statesmanship was of no vulgar cast. He despised the silly and easy, and false old maxims which inculcate universal distrust, whether of unknown men or of novel measures; as much as he did the folly of those whose facility is an advertisement for impostors or for enthusiasts to make dupes of them. His was the skill which knew as well where to give his confidence as to withhold it; and he knew full surely that the whole difficulty of the political art consists in being able to say, whether any given person, or scheme, belongs to the right class or to the wrong. It would be very untrue to affirm that he never wilfully deceived others; but it would probably be still more erroneous to admit that he ever in his life was deceived. So he held in utter scorn the affected wisdom of those who think they prove themselves sound practical men by holding cheap every proposal to which the world

has been little or not at all accustomed, and which appeals for its support to principles rarely resorted to. His own plan for maintaining the peace and independence of Belgium may be cited as an example of a policy at once refined and profound. He would have had it made the resort of the fine arts and of letters, with only force enough to preserve its domestic peace; and trusting for its protection to the general abhorrence which all Europe, must have in these times, of any proceeding hostile to such a power.

Although M. Talleyrand never cultivated the art of oratory, yet his brilliant wit, enlivening a constant vein of deep sense and original observation, and his extraordinary mastery over all the resources of the language in which he expressed himself; gave to the efforts of his pen, as well as to his conversation, a relish, a charm and a grace, that few indeed have ever attained, and certainly none have surpassed. His thorough familiarity with the best writers of his own country was manifest in all his compositions, as well as in his talk; which, however, was too completely modulated to the tone of the most refined society, ever to wear the least appearance of pedantry.—To cite examples of the felicitous turns of his expression in writing, would almost be to take any passage at random of the few works which he has left. But the following description of the American planter may suffice to show how he could paint moral as well as natural scenery. The writers of Chateaubriand's school might envy its poetical effect, and might perhaps learn how possible it is to be pointed and epigrammatic without being affected, and sentimental, without being mawkish.

“ Le bucheron Americain ne s'intresse à rien ; toute idée sensible est loin de lui ; ces branches si elegamment jettées par la nature, un beau feuillage, une couleur vive qui anime une partie du bois, un verd plus fort qui en assombroit une autre, tout cela n'est rien : il n'a de souvenir à placer nulle part : c'est la quantité de coups de hache qu'il faut qu'il donne pour abattre un arbre, qui est son unique idée. Il n'a point planté ; il n'en sait

point les plaisirs. L'arbre qu'il planteroit n'est bon à rien pour lui ; car jamais il ne le verra assez fort pour qu'il puisse l'abattre : c'est de détruire qui le fait vivre : on détruit par-tout : aussi tout lieu lui est bon ; il ne tient pas au champ où il a placé son travail, parce que son travail n'est que de la fatigue, et qu'aucune idée douce n'y est jointe. Ce qui sort de ses mains ne passe point point par toutes les croissances si attachantes pour le cultivateur ; il ne suit pas la destinée de ses productions ; il ne connoit pas le plaisir des nouveaux essais ; et si en s'en allant il n'oublie pas sa hache, il ne laisse pas de regrets là où il a vécu des années."

Of his truly inimitable conversation, and the mixture of strong masculine sense, and exquisitely witty turns in which it abounded,—independently of the interest, and the solid value which it derived from a rich fund of anecdote, delivered in the smallest number possible of the most happy and most appropriate words possible,—it would indeed be difficult to convey an adequate idea. His own powers of picturesque, and wonderfully condensed expression, would be hardly sufficient to present a portrait of its various and striking beauties. Simple and natural, yet abounding in the most sudden and unexpected turns—full of point, yet evidently the inspiration of the moment, and therefore more absolutely to the purpose than if it had been the laboured effort of a day's reflection, a single word often performing the office of sentences, nay, a tone not unfrequently rendering many words superfluous—always the phrase most perfectly suitable selected, and its place most happily chosen—all this is literally correct, and no picture of fancy, but a mere abridgement and transcript of the marvellous original ; and yet it all falls very short of conveying its lineaments, and fails still more to render its colouring and its shades. For there was a constant gaiety of manner, which had the mirthful aspect of good-humour, even on the eve or on the morrow of some flash in which his witty raillery had wrapped a subject or a person in ridicule, or of some torrent in which his satire had descended instantaneous but destructive—there was an

archness of malice, when more than ordinary execution must be done, that defied the pencil of the describer, as it did the attempts of the imitator—there were manners the most perfect in ease, in grace, in flexibility—there was the voice of singular depth and modulation, and the countenance alike fitted to express earnest respect, unostentatious contempt, and bland complacency—and all this must really have been witnessed to be accurately understood. His sayings—his *mots*, as the French have it—are renowned; but these alone convey an imperfect idea of his whole conversation. They show indeed the powers of his wit, and the felicity of his concise diction; and they have a peculiarity of style, such, that, if shown without a name, no one could be at a loss to whom he should attribute them. But they are far enough from completing the sketch of his conversation to those who never heard it. A few instances may, however, be given, chiefly to illustrate what has been said of its characteristic conciseness and selection.

Being asked if a certain authoress, whom he had long since known, but who belonged rather to the last age, was not “un peu ennuyeuse.” “Du tout;” said he, “elle était *parfaitement* ennuyeuse.” A gentleman in company was one day making a somewhat zealous eulogy of his mother’s beauty, dwelling upon the topic at uncalled for length—he himself having certainly inherited no portion of that kind under the marriage of his parents. “C’était, donc, monsieur, votre père qui apparemment n’était pas trop bien,” was the remark, which at once released the circle from the subject. When Madame De Stael published her celebrated novel of *Delphine*, she was supposed to have painted herself in the person of the heroine, and M. Talleyrand in that of an elderly lady who is one of the principal characters. “On me dit” (said he, the first time he met her) “que nous sommes tous les deux dans votre Roman, déguisés en femme.” Rulhieres, the celebrated author of the work on the Polish Revolution, having said, “Je n’ai fait qu’un inconsequence de ma vie;” “Et quand finira-t-elle?” was M. Talleyrand’s reply. “Généve est ennuyeuse, n’est-ce-pas?” asked a friend—

"Surtout quand on s'y amuse," was the answer.—"Elle est insupportable" (said he, with marked emphasis, of one well known; but as if he had gone too far, and to take off somewhat of what he had laid on, he added,) "Elle n'a que ce défaut-là."—"Ah je sens des douleurs infernales," said a person whose life had been supposed to be somewhat of the loosest. "Deja?"* was the inquiry suggested to M. Talleyrand. Nor ought we to pass over the only *mot* that ever will be recorded of Charles X., uttered on his return to France in 1814 on seeing, like our second Charles at a similar reception, that the adversaries of his family had disappeared, "Il n'y a qu'un Français de plus." This was the suggestion of M. Talleyrand. He afterwards proposed, in like manner, to Charles' successor, that the foolish freaks of the Duchesse de Berri should be visited with this rescript to her and her faction—"Madame, il n'y a plus d'espérance pour vous. Vous serez jugée, condamnée, et graciée."

Of his temper and disposition in domestic life, it remains to speak; and nothing could be more perfect than these. If it be true, which is, however, more than questionable, that a life of public business hardens the heart; if this be far more certainly the tendency of a life much chequered with various fortune; if he is almost certain to lose his natural sympathies with mankind, who has in his earliest years tasted the bitter cup of cruel and unnatural treatment, commended to his lips by the hands that should have cherished him; if, above all, a youth of fashionable dissipation and intrigue, such as M. Talleyrand, like most of our own great men, undeniably led, has, in almost every instance been found to eradicate the softer domestic feelings, and to plant every selfish weed in the cold soil of a neglected bosom—surely it is no small praise of his kindly and generous nature, that we are entitled to record how marked an exception he formed to all these rules. While it would be a foolish and a needless exaggeration to represent him as

* Certainly it came naturally to him; it is, however, not original. The Cardinal de Retz's physician is said to have made a similar exclamation on a like occasion:—"Deja, Monseigneur?"

careless of his own interest, or ambition, or gratifications, at any period of his life, it is nevertheless quite true that his disposition continued to the last gentle and kindly; that he not only entertained throughout the tempest of the revolutionary anarchy the strongest abhorrence of all violent and cruel deeds, but exerted his utmost influence in mitigating the excesses which led to them in others; that his love of peace in all its blessed departments, whether tranquillity at home, or amity and good-will abroad, was the incessant object of his labours; that, in domestic life, he was of a peculiarly placid temper, and full of warm and steady affections. His aversion to all violent courses was even, in some instances, carried to a length which prevented his wonted calmness of judgment, and his constant and characteristic love of justice, even when an adversary was concerned, from having their free scope. He never could speak with patience of Carnot, for having continued, during the Reign of Terror, to serve and to save his country by directing the war which defended her against Europe in arms;—forgetting how much less could be urged for his own conduct under the conscriptions of Napoleon, and under the military occupation of the Allies,—even admitting his predominant desire to prevent anarchy and conquest,—than might most fairly be offered in defence of that illustrious Republican's inflexible and uncompromising, though stern and undaunted virtue.

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